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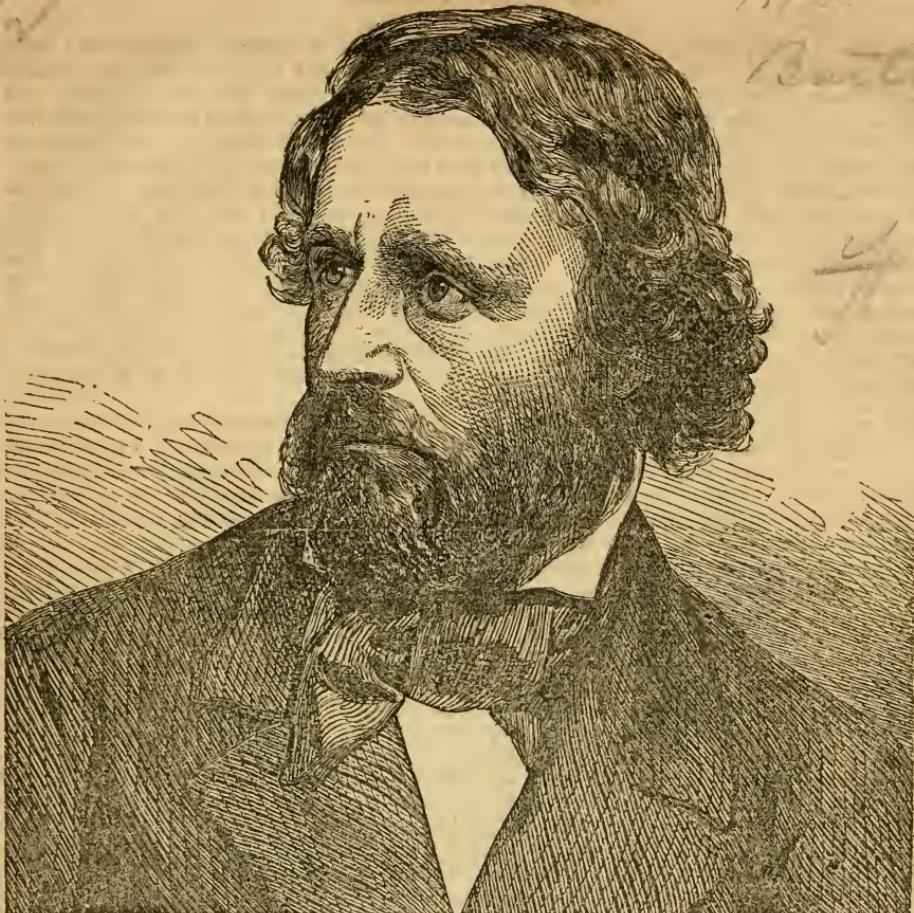


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# LIFE OF COL. FREMONT.

## CHAPTER I.

Birth — His Father — His Mother — Her remarkable Beauty and romantic History — Interesting Incident of Travel, the Fight between Benton and Jackson — Fremont enters a Law Office — Goes to College — Falls in Love with a beautiful West Indian Girl — Is expelled — Becomes a successful Teacher of Mathematics — A Civil Engineer — An Instructor in the Navy — Early an ardent Union man — Professor in the Navy — Resumes Surveying — Accompanies M. Nicollet in his Western Explorations — Commissioned a Lieutenant — First Buffalo Hunt — Forms the acquaintance of Miss Benton — Ordered off to the Des Moines River — Marriage.

JOHN CHARLES FREMONT was born at Savannah, Georgia, the 21st day of January, 1813. His father, for whom, as well as for his grandfather on the same side, he was christened, John Charles, was a Frenchman, from the vicinity of Lyons. He left France, it is believed, on account of having been involved in some revolutionary movement, and was on his way to one of the West India

islands, when the vessel in which he had embarked was captured by a British cruiser, and all the passengers were taken prisoners. While in captivity, they were employed in making willow baskets. To this occupation Mr. Fremont soon added that of painting in fresco; and for ornamenting, in the Spanish style, the ceilings in the houses of some of the wealthy inhabitants, he received a sufficient sum to

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enable him to make his escape to the United States. He landed at Norfolk, and thence proceeded soon afterwards to Richmond, where he commenced giving French lessons. His age, at this time, was about thirty. He was of medium height, slightly formed, of swarthy complexion, with black curling hair, large black eyes, and pleasant, prepossessing countenance, and gay, frank, elegant manners. Something of romance tinged his life. If he was now a poor adventurer, he had proved himself a brave and determined man, and it was not strange that in spite of the intensely bitter prejudices of the day and place, he should have become the object of the devoted love of a high-souled and high-born woman.

At this time, Major Pryor, who had served in the revolutionary war, lived in Richmond. He was a wealthy old man, who, at the age of sixty-two, had married Anne Beverly, the youngest daughter of Colonel Thomas Whiting, just then entering upon her eighteenth year. She was a woman of most extraordinary grace and beauty, of gentle, captivating manners, with a sweet but singularly melancholy disposition. She had been driven to this ill-assorted match by her condition at home with a stepfather, who had squandered the property bequeathed to her by her own father. There was as great disparity of taste as of years between Major Pryor and his wife. She lived unhappily with him. At last she experienced very harsh treatment from her husband. She instantly resolved upon a divorce, which was speedily obtained, and she subsequently married Mr. Fremont. Of course this step drew down upon her head the wrath of all the first families of Virginia, with whom she was connected. That a daughter of the ancient house of the Whitings—a member of which, Col. Thomas Whiting, Sr., held Washington at the font in baptism—should wed a man who actually had to earn his own living, was a sin never to be forgiven; and it never was forgiven.

Mr. Fremont was fond of adventure. He had a strong desire to visit the Indian tribes then inhabiting, in large numbers, the States of North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. Travelling at that day, even with one's own carriage, was not as expensive as it is now. He had saved enough from his earnings as a teacher to purchase the requisite equipments, and, accompanied by his bride, he set out on a tour of exploration through that region. They carried with them, in their private conveyance, beds and bedding, and other conveniences for camping out. They were on a journey of this kind, when the birth of John Charles, their first child, took place. This event did not long delay them. Rude Indian hands were among the first that dandled—and with a carelessness not quite

congenial to a parent's feelings—the new comer. Fremont has often heard his mother say how frightened she was at seeing the savages take him in their arms and pass him about. Indian atrocities were then frequent, and were fresh in everybody's mind. Travel among the Creeks and Choctaws was inseparably attended with a feeling of insecurity. When a white mother saw one of these savages take up her infant, her first apprehension was that he might seize it by the leg and dash out its brains against a tree or stone. Thus, without his own volition, Fremont commenced his life with Indians—the people among whom so large a subsequent portion of it has been passed.

An event, of interest here from the coincidences attending it, occurred while Mr. and Mrs. Fremont were on one of their long excursions. They were stopping at a hotel in Nashville, Tennessee, sitting quietly in their room, when the report of fire-arms in an adjoining apartment, and the whistling of balls through their own, suddenly startled them. They rushed out to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, and learned, in answer to their eager inquiries, that Col. Thomas H. Benton, accompanied by some friends of his, had come to the hotel and commenced an attack with pistols upon Gen. Andrew Jackson, who was defended by Gen. Coffee, and others. On the following day, Col. Benton, who in the heat of the mêlée had carried off Jackson's sword, returned with great formality in front of the hotel, and in a loud voice, three times summoned General Jackson to come forth and recover it. Whether the General was detained in-doors by his friends or his wounds, at all events he failed to appear. Col. Benton then took the sword in both hands, broke it across his knee, and threw the pieces on the ground. This fight was commenced by Col. Benton, to avenge the injuries which his brother, Jesse Benton, had received in a duel with Gen. Jackson. He little dreamed, at the moment of the attack, that his intended victim was to prove the best and most important friend of his after years; and not only so, but that he was endangering, by the shot, the life of his future son-in-law. One unhappy consequence of this affray was the premature confinement of Mrs. Fremont, with a daughter, whose subsequent early death was believed to be attributable, in part, to this circumstance.

Some of the lead which Gen. Jackson then received, he carried with him until his second term of the Presidency. Col. Benton called one day at the White House, and was told that the President was slightly indisposed. A few days afterwards he learned that the old General had been relieved of the last memorial of that fight—he had just had the ball cut out.

Two more children, a daughter and another son, were born to Mr. and Mrs. Fremont within the next four years. A large part of their married life they resided in the city of Norfolk. John Charles had not yet attained to his fifth year when his father, just as he was on the point of returning to his native country, took a sudden cold, from exposure on a hunting excursion, and in a few days died. His widow, with her three little children, was left in circumstances extremely limited. She afterwards married again; but the union brought no accession of comfort or happiness to her or her children.

Young Fremont, after attending school for some time in Norfolk and Charleston, at about the age of thirteen entered the law office of John W. Mitchell, Esq., in Charleston. Mr. Mitchell was a man of exemplary character and of high standing in the community. He took a fancy to Fremont, and invited him to enter his office and prepare himself, ultimately, for the practice of the law. Here Fremont continued about a year, when Mr. Mitchell sent him to the school of Dr. Roberton, a Scotchman of good classical acquirements, and particularly skilled in the ancient languages.

Dr. Roberton is still living, and is now engaged in teaching in the city of Philadelphia. In the preface to one of his school-books, published in 1850, he exhorts his pupils to attention to their studies, and thus sets before them the example of Fremont:

"For your further encouragement, I will here relate a very remarkable instance of patient diligence and indomitable perseverance:

"In the year 1827, after I had returned to Charleston from Scotland, and my classes were going on, a very respectable lawyer came to my school, I think some time in the month of October, with a youth apparently about sixteen, or perhaps not so much (14), of middle size, graceful in manners, rather slender, but well formed, and upon the whole, what I should call handsome; of a keen, piercing eye, and a noble forehead, seemingly the very seat of genius. The gentleman stated that he found him given to study, that he had been about three weeks learning the Latin Rudiments, and (hoping, I suppose, to turn the youth's attention from the law to the ministry) had resolved to place him under my care for the purpose of learning Greek, Latin, and Mathematics, sufficient to enter Charleston College. I very gladly received him, for I immediately perceived he was no common youth, as intelligence beamed in his dark eye, and shone brightly on his countenance, indicating great ability, and an assurance of his future progress. I at once put him in the highest class, just beginning to read Caesar's Commentaries, and although at first inferior, his prodigious memory and enthusiastic application soon enabled him to surpass the best. He began Greek at the same time, and read with some who had been long at it, in which he also soon excelled. And whatever he read, he retained. It seemed to me, in fact, as if he learned by mere intuition. I was myself utterly astonished, and at the same time delighted with his progress. I have hinted that he was designed for the Church, but when I contemplated his bold, fearless disposition, his

powerful inventive genius, his admiration of warlike exploits, and his love of heroic and adventurous deeds, I did not think it likely he would be a minister of the Gospel. He had not, however, the least appearance of any vice whatever. On the contrary, he was always the very pattern of virtue and modesty. I could not help loving him, so much did he captivate me by his gentlemanly conduct and extraordinary progress. It was easy to see that he would one day raise himself to eminence. \* \* \* \* \* At the end of one year, he entered the Junior Class in Charleston College triumphantly, while others who had been studying four years and more, were obliged to take the Sophomore Class. His career afterwards has been one of heroic adventure, of hair-breadth escapes by flood and field, and of scientific explorations, which have made him world-wide renowned. \* \* \* \* \* Such, my young friends, is but an imperfect sketch of my once beloved and favorite pupil, now a Senator, and who may yet rise to be at the head of this great and growing republic."

Fremont's rapid progress in his collegiate studies was suddenly arrested. Philosophy deeper than that of the schools, poetry all fresh and living, with a glow not found on the pages of the classics, he had discovered in a beautiful young West Indian girl, whose family, driven from St. Domingo by the revolution, had come to Charleston to reside. He turned from the books which had captivated his boyhood, and which he in turn was rapidly mastering, to bathe himself in the elysium of first love. He gazed upon her coal black hair, her fine features, and delicate form, and realized a vision of beauty, such as had not before presented itself to his imagination. He looked into her sparkling eyes, and all that had seemed brightness to him before faded in comparison. The tones of her gentle voice fell upon his ear, and it grew deaf to the summons of Ambition which had sounded so loud before.

"—the high and powerful ones of earth,  
The grave and schooled philosophers.  
The helmed sons of victory, have turned  
Each from the separate idol  
Of his high and vehement ambition,  
To the low idolatry of human love."

Fremont's books, to which he had been so ardently devoted, were neglected. He was absent from recitations. The faculty, by whom, on account of his former proficiency, he was highly esteemed, remonstrated with him repeatedly, but all in vain. They finally peremptorily demanded an explanation of his continued absences. He haughtily refused the slightest. There was no course left but to expel him, and he was expelled. He bore it with entire stoicism, considering

"The world well lost, and all for love..."

About this time his brother, who was the youngest of the three children, left home, without informing the family whether he was going. Soon afterwards the mysterious hand

of death removed from his side his lovely and only sister, then but seventeen years of age. He now grew more serious and thoughtful, and life began to wear to him a different and more solemn aspect. He firmly resolved that no pang should ever be added, by any act of his, to the fast accumulating griefs of his mother's heart. Teaching opened to him the best prospect of immediate usefulness. He commenced a private school in Charleston, and soon had a large number of pupils. At the same time he conducted the classes in several other schools through the higher branches of mathematics, in which their instructors were deficient. His evenings, also, were profitably employed in giving instruction at the Apprentices' Library. Marked success rewarded his brief career as teacher. He had only assumed it as a temporary occupation. He next turned his attention to civil engineering, as opening a wider field of labor, and one more consistent with his tastes and objects in life. It happened that, for the purpose of partition among the heirs, a survey and plan of the estate of a deceased planter in the vicinity of Charleston were wanted. The work had already been undertaken by several, who, from not making sufficient allowance for the variation of the needle, or some other cause, had not succeeded in running the lines right. Under these circumstances, Fremont was applied to. The reputation which he had already acquired for proficiency and accuracy in mathematics, caused the parties to turn to him as the most competent person to extricate them from their difficulty. It was in summer—the unhealthy season—when work in the low grounds could be performed only at the hazard of life. Fremont promptly undertook the task, and accomplished it to the entire satisfaction of the parties.

Early in the year 1833, through the steadfast friendship of Mr. Poinsett, then Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Fremont was appointed teacher of Mathematics on board the sloop-of-war Natchez, which had been sent by Gen. Jackson to Charleston, to enforce his famous proclamation for the suppression of Nullification. Fremont, though still a minor, had already taken decided ground in favor of the proclamation of the old Hero, and was known as a Union-saving man of the stiffest kind. Mr. Poinsett had enrolled his name in the Light Cavalry of Charleston, who were to be called into service in case of emergency. He remained on board the Natchez more than two years, most of the time cruising off the coast of South America.

Soon after his return to Charleston the university, which had expelled him, deemed him worthy of the bestowment of its honors, and conferred upon him the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts.

While he had been absent the grade of Professor of Mathematics in the Navy had been established by law. Mr. Fremont applied for an appointment under this act. Candidates were required to pass a most rigorous examination before a board assembled in Baltimore. Mr. Fremont went triumphantly through the severe ordeal, which only five or six, out of about forty, succeeded in passing at all.

He received his commission and was assigned to the U. S. Frigate Independence; but never went on board of her. He made up his mind to continue the pursuit of civil engineering. For a few weeks he was engaged in improving the route of the Charleston and Hamburg Rail-road, so as to avoid an inclined plane, with stationary engines, then existing upon it.

He was next employed upon the survey of a rail-road route from Charleston to Cincinnati, under Capt. W. G. Williams, who afterwards fell at the battle of Monterey. To this service he was appointed by Gen. Jackson, under the act of Congress of April 30, 1824, which authorized the President to employ two or more skillful engineers on roads and canals of national importance in a commercial or military point of view, or for the transportation of the public mail. The summer of 1837 he spent in the performance of this duty, principally among the mountains in North and South Carolina and Tennessee. The following winter he was engaged under the same officer in making a military reconnaissance of the country of the Cherokees, in anticipation of hostilities between them and the whites. This was his first experience since childhood among the Indians. They were generally in a very unfriendly state of feeling towards the whites. A treaty had been negotiated for their removal to the West. Many of them had quite comfortable houses and good farms where they were, and general dissatisfaction at the prospect of removal prevailed among them. Mr. Fremont and his companions used to camp out nights, protecting themselves against the cold of the winter by large hickory fires. Much of the time the ground was covered with snow. In the darkness the owls would hoot in the trees over their heads, and the panthers prowled about their encampments. It was a good apprenticeship to his subsequent exploring expeditions. A backwoodsman, named Jacob Lowdermilk, was employed by Mr. Fremont as a guide. He was a superior specimen of the frontier hunter—a good marksman, and perfectly familiar with the country. On one occasion Fremont and his guide arrived at an Indian village at dusk, and found the men all indulging in a drunken frolic. At such times they are little better than brutes. They fight, and cut, and gash each other with-

out ceremony, and seem to care nothing at all about it. The women immediately gave notice to their visitors that they were in great danger, and placed them secretly in an out-building used for storing corn, to pass the night. Here they slept as best they could, with corn on the cobs for their bed, and the rats running frequently over them for their entertainment.

In the Spring of 1838, Mr. Fremont returned to Washington, and joined M. Nicollet, a scientific Frenchman, who had been engaged by the U. S. Government to make an examination of the Minnesota country, between the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers. While absent on this expedition he received the commission of Second Lieutenant of the Topographical Engineers. Fremont's principal occupation on this journey was aiding M. Nicollet in his scientific observations, and in making sketches.

The following winter the party returned—M. Nicollet to St. Louis, and Lieutenant Fremont to Washington—and almost immediately set out together on another similar expedition, with orders to explore the country lying between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers still farther, and up to the British line.

While on this expedition Lieutenant Fremont participated for the first time in a Buffalo hunt. About thirteen hundred miles above St. Louis at a trading fort, called Fort Pierre, the party crossed the Missouri river, there more than a mile broad, and going a few miles out into the prairie, made their camp. Some of the hunters who had been out on horseback came in and reported that buffaloes in large numbers were in the vicinity. This was in the afternoon. Immediately Lieutenant Fremont and six others mounted their horses, and started on a buffalo hunt. After a few miles riding they came in sight of several large herds. They turned aside to a little hill, which concealed them from the buffaloes, lightened themselves of everything not necessary to the race—their coats, hats, and everything dispensable—they took off their neckerchiefs and tied them around their heads, and set out in good earnest, for a herd. They soon came up to the buffaloes, and in five minutes afterwards, three only—of whom Fremont was one—out of the party of seven, were remaining in their saddles. Losing sight of his companions, and intent only on killing a buffalo, Fremont sped on in swift pursuit of the flying herd; on, on, firing whenever he got near enough, and, still unsuccessful, pressing with yet greater speed on. The frightened animals kept before him, and out of the reach of a fatal shot, though he succeeded in wounding several. At length, he found the day so far advanced as to admonish him of the propriety of commencing to

retrace his steps. He examined the country, and determined which way he ought to proceed. He took a broad, clearly-marked path, and rode on, hour after hour, many and many a weary mile.

His horse grew tired, and he alternately rode and led him. At length he discovered that it was a buffalo trail which he had been pursuing; that the map which he had as his only guide was erroneous; a bend of the river, sixty miles in length, was not laid down upon it, and thus, through a gross blunder of the geographer, he had got lost. This little incident was well calculated to impress upon his mind an increased conviction of the importance and value of a more correct and exact knowledge of the geography of some portions of our country than was then possessed. It was now near midnight. He found a ravine containing water, and determined to picket his horse and lie down till morning. Tying the long rope by which the horse was secured, to the saddle, and laying that down for a pillow, so that the horse could not stray off without disturbing him, he was about to lie down to sleep, when he beheld rocket after rocket ascend into the air. He knew at once that these were sent up from the camp as signals for him. But he was too far off, and his horse was too tired, to reach there that night. So he carefully laid his rifle down on the ground, pointing precisely in the direction of the camp, and went to sleep. With the dawn of day he was astir, and started towards the camp. He had proceeded but a little way when he perceived several horsemen in the distance. They rapidly approached him, and he soon discovered that they were some of his companions. Up they rode, in great haste, stretching out towards him their hands in a half frenzied manner. He did not know what to make of it. At length the foremost of the party touched him, and he then received an explanation of their apparently strange conduct, in the circumstance that a reward, after he was known to have got lost, had been offered in camp, to the man who should first lay hands upon him.

For more than a year after his return from this second expedition, in 1839, Lieutenant Fremont was busy in assisting M. Nicollet, and Mr. Hassler, then at the head of the coast survey, in preparing a report and an illustrative map.

This residence in the fashionable metropolis, during which nothing but steady and quiet labor had been anticipated, was marked by events not less interesting in the life of Fremont, and which took far deeper hold of his being, than any of his wild adventures in the mountains of Tennessee or the prairies of the West. One evening, at a concert, he was struck with the resemblance in the fair face of a very

youthful-looking girl to his departed sister. He inquired of a friend who she was, and learned in reply that she was Miss Jessie Benton, the second daughter of Col. Benton. Just as he put the question he was startled to hear her inquire who he was. Mutual admiration had seized them. Unfortunately it did not extend so as to comprehend within the charmed circle her parents—at least not sufficiently to secure their consent to the marriage, which, a year and a half later, resulted from the acquaintance. They objected on account of the extreme youth of their daughter, who at the time of the first meeting was only fifteen years old, and because he was but a subordinate officer in the army, without sufficient means to support a family. He had, also, to contend with most formidable rivals for her hand. His perplexities were increased by the reception of an unexpected order to proceed to the Territory of Iowa, and make a survey of the Des Moines River. The precise useful object to be subserved by this work has never yet transpired. Fremont faithfully obeyed the order, and returned to find the opposition to

his marriage still unabated. But love is strong, and both parties had strong wills of their own. They were married in the city of Washington, in 1841, at the house of a friend, who procured a Catholic priest to perform the ceremony, after Lieutenant Fremont had applied in vain to a Protestant clergyman to officiate. It is believed that not one word upon the subject of the marriage ever passed between the father of the bride and his son-in-law after it took place. Both Mr. and Mrs. Benton had from their first acquaintance with Mr. Fremont, been pleased with his modesty and refined manners. But neither of them dreamed of the bright and important future which the hand of the quiet and retiring young lieutenant was to carve out for himself. There is a story that some years afterwards, an elderly friend of the great Missourian, who had been listening to an unmeasured eulogium from him upon his son-in-law, inquired how it happened that he so strenuously opposed his marriage; and that Col. Benton replied that it merely proved that his daughter had turned out a better judge of men than he was.

## CHAPTER II.

**F**irst Exploring Expedition—Kit Carson—Randolph Benton—False Alarm—Warlike Indians—Slaughter of the whole Party threatened—Speech of an Indian Chief—Fremont's chivalric Reply—He moves forward in the face of Danger—A useful Squaw—More Discouragements—Fremont undaunted—Devotion of his Men—Mountain Sheep—Turns his hand to Instrument mending—Raises the Flag on the highest Peak of the Rocky Mountains.

**F**REMONT has conducted five Exploring Expeditions—the first to the Rocky Mountains, and the four subsequent ones as far as California. He started from Washington on the first expedition commanded by himself, on the 2d day of May, 1842, under orders to explore and report upon the country between the frontiers of Missouri and the South Pass in the Rocky Mountains, and on the line of the Kansas and Great Platte Rivers. On the 22d of May he arrived at St. Louis, and in that vicinity collected together twenty-one men, principally Creole and Canadian *voyageurs*, who had become familiar with prairie life in the service of the fur companies in the Indian country. The final arrangements for the expedition were completed at Chouteau's Trading House, near the mouth of the Kansas River, about four hundred miles from St. Louis.

The guide was Christopher Carson, known for his exploits in the mountains, more familiarly as Kit Carson. This man has attained to a greater celebrity than any other of the heroic sharers in Fremont's adventures. Kit is a native of Kentucky, the son of one of the early hunters of that State, and is about two

years older than Mr. Fremont. A great portion of his life has been spent as a trapper and hunter among the Indians. He is a short, light, but muscular man, with mild blue eyes, an open, pleasant countenance, indicative of a naturally amiable disposition. He is fearless, thoroughly trained to the difficulties and dangers of life in the wilderness, a dead shot with the rifle, can track an Indian as if with the scent of a hound, and in an emergency can even practice the trick of the savage with the scalping-knife. He sticks to a steed as the skin on his back, and rides like the wind. Fremont says in his narrative that, mounted on a fine horse, without a saddle, and scouring bareheaded over the prairies, Kit was one of the finest pictures of a horseman that he had ever seen. His first wife was a Sioux. After her death he married a native of New Mexico, where he now lives, surrounded by his family, engaged in the peaceful pursuit of farming, and also acting in the official capacity of Indian Agent for that territory. Lieutenant Fremont first fell in with Carson on a steamboat above St. Louis, as he was starting on this expedition. He was fortunate in securing such a

Before starting on this journey, Lieutenant Fremont received a marked compliment—thus soon after his marriage—from his father-in-law, who entrusted to him, under the hazardous circumstances which must attend his exploits, his only son, Randolph Benton, then a boy of twelve years. Young Benton soon proved himself worthy of his name and blood. His first night on guard was one in which the blackness of darkness was made visible by the frequent lightning with which the whole sky seemed tremulous. Rain poured in torrents, and the loud thunder rolled overhead. Stories of bloody Indian fights were rife in the camp. But the brave boy—with a companion of nineteen, Henry Brant of St. Louis—stood it out, and they regularly took their turn afterwards. At Fort Laramie the hostile disposition prevailing among the Indians became so clearly developed that it was deemed prudent to leave them both. Benton, to use the language of Fremont, had been “the life of the camp.” They were sorry to part with him. His sudden death, at St. Louis, at the age of twenty-one, after manifesting bright signs of promise, gives a melancholy interest to this brief mention of him. He was the sole inheritor of his father’s name. Only a few days before his death he made an address in German to Gov. Kossuth, then on a visit to Missouri, which was highly commended.

Fremont had one man in his party who had probably received his training at the hands of some old politicians. On the morning of June 22d, as they were proceeding up the valley of a little creek in the country of the Pawnees, this man, who was a short distance in the rear, came spurring up in great haste, shouting Indians! Indians! He had been near enough to see and count them, according to his report, and had made out twenty-seven. They immediately halted and put their arms in order, and Kit Carson was dispatched to reconnoitre. He soon returned with the intelligence that the Indian war party of twenty-seven, consisted of six elk, which had been gazing curiously at the caravan as it passed by and were now scampering off at full speed!

If the man who made the first report, not only more than quadrupling their number, but also converting these simple elk into savage Indians, with tomahawk and scalping-knife in hand, is still extant, he might find congenial employment, though not without powerful rivalry, in the service of the Democratic party.

Fremont gives the following account of a dog feast, which, in compliance with one invitation out of many of a similar character from the Indians, he attended:

“The women and children were sitting outside the lodge, and we took our seats on buffalo robes spread around. The dog was in a large pot over

the fire, in the middle of the lodge, and immediately on our arrival was dished up in large wooden bowls, one of which was handed to each. The flesh appeared very glutinous, with something of the flavor and appearance of mutton. Feeling something move behind me, I looked round, and found that I had taken my seat among a litter of fat young puppies. Had I been nice in such matters, the prejudices of civilization might have interfered with my tranquillity; but, fortunately, I am not of delicate nerves, and continued quietly to empty my platter.”

On the 13th of July they arrived at Fort Laramie, in Nebraska. Here they found that the country was swarming with scattered war-parties of Indians. The very atmosphere seemed to be filled with stories of blood and carnage, which in some form were inhaled with every breath. Difficulties and encounters had taken place between parties of whites and the savages, and the latter were terribly exasperated. Panic seized the men. Fremont remained calm and determined. Desiring to have no one with him who was afraid, he addressed his men and told them that such as were anxious to return had only to come forward at once and state their desire, and they would be discharged with the amount due to them for the time they had served. Only one man, however, availed himself of the permission. But those who resolved to go on were not insensible to the dangers actually existing. Even Kit Carson made his will.

On the twenty-first they were ready to depart. The tents were struck, the mules geared up, the horses saddled, they had walked to the fort to take a *stirrup cup* with their friends, in an excellent home-brewed preparation, when in rushed four powerful, fine-looking Indian chiefs, rejoicing respectively in the names of Otter-Hat, Breaker of Arrows, Black-Night, and Bull’s-Tail, and delivered to Lieut. Fremont a note from Joseph Bissonette, the interpreter, advising him that the chiefs in council had told him to warn Fremont not to set out before their young men, who had gone to the mountains, and who would be sure to fire on him as soon as they should meet him, should return. Then one of the savages stood up and spoke as follows:

#### WARNING OF THE INDIAN CHIEF.

“You have come among us at a bad time. Some of our people have been killed, and our young men, who have gone to the mountains, are eager to avenge the blood of their relations, which has been shed by the whites. Our young men are bad, and, if they meet you, they will believe that you are carrying goods and ammunition to their enemies, and will fire upon you. You have told us that this will make war. We know that our great father has many soldiers and big guns, and we are anxious to have our lives. We love the whites, and are desirous of peace. Thinking of all these things, we have determined to keep you here until our warriors return. We are glad to see you among us. Our father is rich, and we expected that you would have brought presents to us—horses, guns, and blankets.

But we are glad to see you. We look upon your coming as the light which goes before the sun; for you will tell our great father that you have seen us, and that we are naked and poor, and have nothing to eat; and he will send us all these things."

Lieut. Fremont, through an interpreter, requested some of the Indians to accompany him, as their presence would avert the danger. They refused. It was then that the young explorer, rising with the emergency, to the sublimest heroism, gave back in response for their false professions and menacing assertions, the lie and defiance in their teeth.

The addresses by Bonaparte to his soldiers, before his great battles, and on the fields of his glory, are almost matchless in their eloquence, and among the most brilliant emanations of genius. Is there anything in them, which—especially if all the surrounding circumstances be taken into consideration—surpasses the following?

#### FREMONT'S REPLY TO THE INDIAN CHIEF.

"You say that you love the whites; why have you killed so many already this spring? You say that you love the whites, and are full of many expressions of friendship to us; but you are not willing to undergo the fatigue of a few days' ride to save our lives. We do not believe what you have said, and will not listen to you. Whatever a chief among us tells his soldiers to do, is done. We are the soldiers of the great chief, your father. He has told us to come here and see this country, and all the Indians his children. Why should we not go? Before we came, we heard that you had killed his people, and ceased to be his children; but we came among you peaceably, holding out our hands. Now, we find that the stories we heard are not lies, and that you are no longer his friends and children. We have thrown away our bodies, and will not turn back. When you told us that your young men would kill us, you did not know that our hearts were strong, and you did not see the rifles which my young men carry in their hands. We are few, and you are many, and may kill us all; but there will be much crying in your villages, for many of your young men will stay behind, and forget to return with your warriors from the mountains. Do you think that our great chief will let his soldiers die and forget to cover their graves? Before the snows melt again, his warriors will sweep away your villages, as the fire does the prairie in the autumn. See! I have pulled down my *white houses*, and my people are ready; when the sun is ten paces higher, we shall be on the march. If you have anything to tell us, you will say it soon."

"Is the route practicable?" asked Napoleon of the engineer who had been sent forward to survey Mount St. Bernard. "It is barely possible," was the reply. "Forward then," said Napoleon; and his words became immortal.

Fremont received a different answer from his guide. Friend and foe alike held up before him, vividly, the prospect of certain destruction. Carson, the personification of courage, saw occasion to make the last preparations for death, and executed his will. Condensing his soul into a few undying words: "We have

thrown away our bodies and will not turn back," said the unwavering hero.

They mounted their horses and rode on. The Indians, notwithstanding all that they had said, sent a chief up, just as they were starting, and promised a guide, who joined them at their stopping-place that evening. He came with Mr. Bissonette, the interpreter, and was accompanied by his wife. Her services proved very convenient just at that hour. Lieut. Fremont had procured a large Indian lodge at the Fort, and none of the men understood how to pitch it. The squaw laughed at their awkwardness and offered her assistance, which they continued to avail themselves of till the men acquired sufficient expertness to pitch it without difficulty. On the 28th of July they met a large company of Indians who gave a very discouraging picture of the country. The great draught, and the plague of grasshoppers, had swept it so that scarce a blade of grass was to be seen, and there was not a buffalo to be found in the whole region. Their people, they further said, had been nearly starved to death, and their road would be found marked by lodges which they had thrown away in order to move more rapidly, and by the carcasses of the horses which they had eaten, or which had perished by starvation. Such was the prospect which they depicted. Mr. Bissonette, the interpreter, immediately rode up to Col. Fremont and urgently advised that he should entirely abandon the further prosecution of his exploration. "The best advice I can give you," said he, "is to turn back at once." It was his own intention to return, as they had now reached the point to which he had engaged to go. Lieut. Fremont called up his men, and communicated to them fully the information he had received, and then expressed to them his fixed determination to proceed to the end of the enterprise on which he had been sent; but as the situation of the country gave some reason to apprehend that it might be attended with an unfortunate result to some, he would leave it optional with them to continue with him or to return.

But not a man flinched from the undertaking, "We'll eat the mules," said Basil Lajennesse; and thereupon they shook hands with the interpreter and his Indians, and parted. With them was sent back one of the men, Dumé, whom the effects of an old wound in the leg rendered incapable of continuing the journey on foot, and whose horse seemed on the point of giving out.

The second day after this, as they were crossing over from the Platte to the Sweet Water River, they discovered, for the first time, numerous herds of mountain sheep, or goats, for they are called by both names. The flesh of these animals resembles that of the Alleghany mountain sheep. Their horns are frequently

three feet long, and seventeen inches in circumference at the base, weighing eleven pounds. The use of these horns seems to be to protect the animal's head in pitching down precipices to avoid the pursuing wolves.

On the 10th day of August they came unexpectedly in view of a most beautiful lake, set like a gem in the mountains. Proceeding on, amid the grand scenery by which they were surrounded, they soon reached the outlet, and in attempting to ford it, experienced a piece of bad luck, which, with the remedy invented for it, are thus described in the narrative:

"In crossing this stream, I met with a great misfortune in having my barometer broken. It was the only one. A great part of the interest of the journey for me was in the exploration of these mountains, of which much had been said that was doubtful and contradictory; and now their snowy peaks rose majestically before me, and the only means of giving them authentically to science, the object of my anxious solicitude by night and day, was destroyed. We had brought this barometer in safety a thousand miles, and broke it almost among the snow of the mountains. The loss was felt by the whole camp—all had seen my anxiety, and aided me in preserving it. The height of these mountains, considered by the hunters and traders the highest in the whole range, had been a theme of constant discussion among them; and all had looked forward with pleasure to the moment when the instrument, which they believed to be true as the sun, should stand upon the summits, and decide their disputes. Their grief was only inferior to my own.

As soon as the camp was formed, I set about endeavoring to repair my barometer. As I have already said, this was a standard cistern barometer, of Troughton's construction. The glass cistern had been broken about midway; but as the instrument had been kept in a proper position, no air had found its way into the tube, the end of which had always remained covered. I had with me a number of vials of tolerably thick glass, some of which were of the same diameter as the cistern, and I spent the day in slowly working on these, endeavoring to cut them of the requisite length; but as my instrument was a very rough file, I invariably broke them. A groove was cut in one of the trees, where the barometer was placed during the night, to be out of the way of any possible danger, and in the morning I commenced again. Among the powder-horns in the camp, I found one which was very transparent, so that its contents could be almost as plainly seen as through glass. This I boiled and stretched on a piece of wood to the requisite diameter, and scraped it very thin, in order to increase to the utmost its transparency. I then secured it firmly in its place on the instrument, with strong glue made from a buffalo, and filled it with mercury, properly heated. A piece of skin, which had covered one of the vials, furnished a good pocket, which was well secured with strong thread and glue, and then the brass cover was screwed to its place. The instrument was left some time to dry; and when I reversed it, a few hours after, I had the satisfaction to find it in perfect order; its indication being about the same as on the other side of the lake before it had been broken. Our success in this little incident diffused pleasure throughout the camp; and we immediately set about our preparations for ascending the mountains."

They were now on that short mountain chain from which flow the Platte and Mis-

souri Rivers to the East and the Colorado and Columbia westward. Their provisions had well nigh disappeared. Two or three pounds of coffee, a little macaroni, and some dried buffalo meat, as hard as wood, were all they had remaining. Bread had long been out of the question. Game was very scarce. They were surrounded by the Black Feet Indians, who were not friendly, and a strong guard was constantly necessary. But Fremont would not turn his face from the mountains till he should have explored their highest peak. In a grove of beech, near a lake, they erected a breast-work of felled timber and interwoven branches, facing an Indian fort only two or three hundred feet distant. Fifteen of the best mules and fourteen men were selected for the mountain party.

Early on the morning of August 12th, they left the camp and commenced the ascent. They found a rocky road and a tortuous way, interrupted by broken ledges, precipices and lakes of surpassing beauty. Impassable barriers, at which the guides seemed astonished, barred their progress, and from one route they turned to another. Finally, in the afternoon, they discovered a little defile leading towards what, after long consultation, they had decided to be the highest peak of the range, and were delighted with the prospect of a smoother road for the next day. They returned just in time for supper.

The next morning they started again bright and early, and having entered the little defile, followed it about three miles, when they reached its abrupt termination. The view here was grand and beautiful. The eye could stretch forward, but there was no chance for the mules to go. Asters were in bloom around, and their fragrance ascended. The men began to wish that they might go up as easily as this sweet smell, for unless they could climb by the atmosphere there seemed to be no other mode of ascent. They had the consolation to reflect that their bodies were daily growing lighter, and might not encumber their spirits much longer. Fremont, however, was determined to go on whether there was any way or not. They left their mules and undertook to proceed on foot. A few men remained in charge of the animals, and the rest moved forward as they could. The peak seemed near, and they thought that they could reach it and get back to the camp before night. They soon found themselves involved in ragged precipices. They clambered on, always expecting, with every ridge they crossed, to reach the foot of the peak, and always disappointed. At night they encamped by a little lake. Large flocks of mountain-goats appeared in sight. Several went in pursuit of them, but returned without killing any. Shortly after they encamped, Fremont was taken sick.

denly sick, with head-ache and vomiting, which continued till late in the night.

The following morning they rose from their granite beds with the daylight, and tried again to make the ascent. They got dispersed among some ice-fields, every man trying to find the best way up. One man, Mr. Preuss, attempted to walk on the edge of one of these ice-fields, when his feet slipped from under him, and he went plunging down the plain several hundred feet, among some sharp fragments of rock, turning two somersets on his way down. Carson made out to reach one of the snowy summits of the main ridge, and still beheld the peak, towards which all their efforts were directed, towering eight or ten hundred feet into the air above him. Fremont grew worse rather than better, and despatched Basil Lajeunesse and four men back to the place where the mules had been left, with directions to bring back, if possible, four or five mules with him, and such provisions as there were remaining. The party now straggled back, one after another, into the camp. Basil returned in the evening, having exchanged his four men for fresh ones, and bringing some dried beef, coffee, and blankets. Lieut. Fremont entirely recovered his health that night.

In the morning, Carson returned to the camp of the mules, leaving only four men with Fremont. This was the 15th of August, the great day of the expedition, for on this day the excelsior dream of the explorer was realized, and the American flag was carried higher than it ever went before.

The sure-footed mules leaped from one

sharp angular point of rock to another as far as they could go; then they were left and the men climbed up the steep, slippery rocks, holding on with their toes and fingers. At last, Fremont sprang upon the summit. Another step would have precipitated him into an immense snow-field five hundred feet below. To the edge of this field was a sheer icy precipice; and then with a gradual fall, the field sloped off for about a mile, until it struck the foot of another lower ridge. Fremont stood on a narrow crest, only about three feet wide, with a considerable inclination. He got down, and every man ascended in his turn. He would allow but one at a time to mount the unstable and precarious slab, which it seemed a breath would hurl into the abyss below. Here they mounted the barometer in the snow of the summit, and fixing a ramrod in a crevice, unfurled the national flag to wave in the breeze where never flag waved before. Strangely enough a solitary bee appeared in this elevated and cold place, and lit on the knee of one of the men. He was pressed between the leaves of a large book of flowers. They regarded him as the emblem of civilization, the precursors in which often meet his fate: they perish but are preserved in books. This is the highest peak of the Rocky Mountains, and is now called Fremont's Peak.

That night they got back to their deposit of provisions, and slept on the solid rock. The next day they were again in motion, homewards bound; and on the 17th of October, having experienced many vicissitudes of more or less interest and hazard, they were once more safe

at St. Louis.

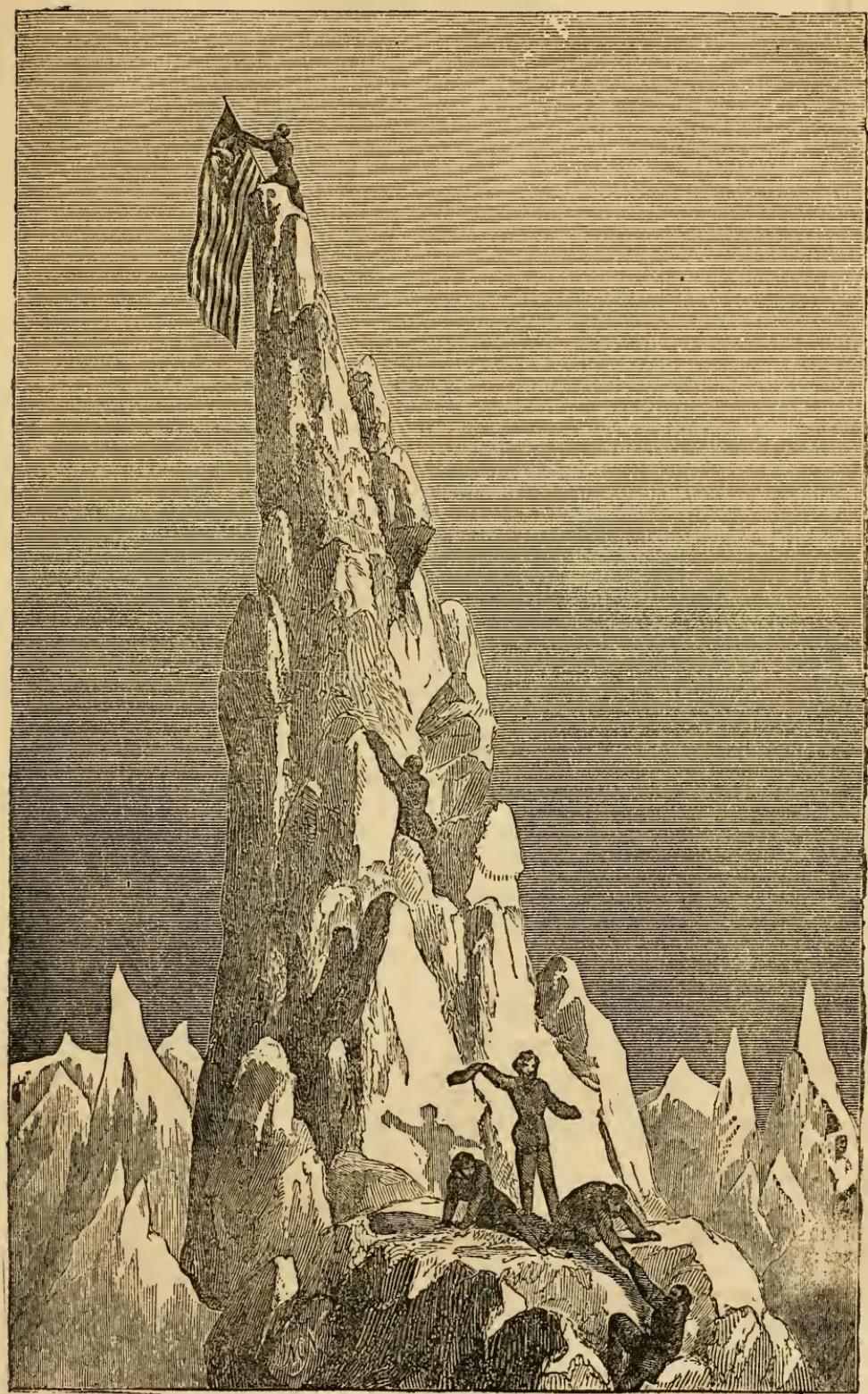
### CHAPTER III.

**S**econd Expedition—Gentlemen a Nuisance among Explorers—Fremont chooses himself to Experiment on with Suspected Meat—The Widow of a Murdered Man protected—Finding of a Stray Ox—Irruption of Shoshonee Indians—Eating Valerian—Destitute Condition of Indian Women—Lüder's Bay—The Indian Guide Deserts—Feast on Pea Soup, Mule and Dog—Man Crazed by Hunger—Arrival at Sutter's Fort—Set out to Return—Scalping a Live Indian—A Man Murdered by the Savages—Another Killed by Accident—Arrival at St. Louis.

**A**CCOMPANIED by thirty-nine men, Fremont left the town of Kansas, on his second exploring expedition, May 29, 1843. His instructions were to connect his reconnoisance of 1842 with the surveys of Commander Wilkes on the Pacific ocean, so as to give a connected survey of the interior of our continent.

He permitted a few travellers not belonging to the party to accompany him, but soon came near paying a severe penalty for this courtesy. A horse belonging to one of these persons was, through carelessness, allowed to escape. A man who was sent in pursuit of him returned to

the camp at full speed, followed by a war party of Osage Indians, with gay, red blankets, and heads shaved to the scalp lock. The Osages when they charged into the camp drove off a number of the best horses; but fortunately they were all recovered. "This accident," says Lieut. Fremont, "which occasioned delay and trouble, and threatened danger and loss, and broke down some good horses at the start, and actually endangered the expedition, was a first fruit of having gentlemen in company—very estimable, to be sure, but who are not trained to the care, and vigilance, and self-dependence which such an expedition required, and who



are not subject to the orders which enforce attention and exertion."

On the 9th of July they killed a buffalo bull. The day following several of the men were sick, and Lieut. Fremont attributed it to eating the bull's meat. On the 11th he writes :

" As the greater part of the men continued sick I encamped here for the day, and ascertained conclusively from experiments on myself that their illness was caused by meat of the buffalo bull."

On July 20th, some Delaware Indians who had been of the party were obliged to return to their homes, and Alexander Godey, a young man of about 25 years of age, in courage and skill as a hunter a formidable rival to Carson, was engaged, in their place, to shoot game.

An Indian woman of the Snake nation, the widow of a Frenchman who had been murdered a little previous, was here taken into protection, with her two little half-breeds, and provided with a small tent. She was returning to her own people.

On the second of August, everybody, was surprised by the appearance of a large red ox. He had probably made his escape from some party of emigrants on Green River; and with a vivid remembrance of some old green field, he was pursuing the straightest course for the frontier that the country admitted. Fremont says :

" We carried him along with us as a prize; and when it was found in the morning that he had wandered off, I would not let him be pursued, for I would rather have gone through a starving time of three entire days, than let him be killed after he had successfully run the gauntlet so far among the Indians."

The reader familiar with the political history of this country will be struck with the marked resemblance of the sentiment here exhibited, and that once so tersely expressed by HENRY CLAY on the recapture of fugitive slaves.

" I have been told," continues Fremont, " by Mr. Bent's people, of an ox born and raised at St. Vrain's fort, which made his escape from them at Elm grove, near the frontier, having come in that year with the wagons. They were on their way out, and saw occasionally places where he had eaten and lain down to rest; but did not see him for about 700 miles, when they overtook him on the road, travelling along to the fort, having unaccountably escaped Indians and every other mischance."

August 21st, in the valley of Bear River, the principal tributary to the Great Salt Lake, they came into the vicinity of a large village of the Shoshonee Indians. The narrative says :

" We had approached within something more than a mile of the village, when suddenly a single horseman emerged from it at full speed, followed by ano-

ther, and another in rapid succession; and then party after party poured into the plain, until, when the foremost rider reached us, all the whole intervening plain was occupied by a mass of horsemen, which came charging down upon us with guns, naked swords, lances, and bows and arrows—Indians entirely naked, and warriors fully dressed for war, with the long red streamers of their war bonnets reaching nearly to the ground, all mingled together in the bravery of savage warfare. They had been thrown into a sudden tumult by the appearance of our flag, which, among these people, is regarded as an emblem of hostility—it being usually borne by the Sioux, and the neighboring mountain Indians when they come here to war: and we had accordingly, been mistaken for a body of their enemies. A few words from the chief quieted the excitement; and the whole band, increasing every moment in number, escorted us to their encampment. I ate there for the first time, the *Kooyal*, or *tobacco root*, (*valeuria edulis*), the principal edible root among the Indians who inhabit the upper waters of the streams on the western side of the mountains. It has a very strong and remarkably peculiar taste and odor, which I can compare to no other vegetable that I am acquainted with, and which to some persons is extremely offensive. It was characterized by Mr. Preuss as the most horrid food he had ever put in his mouth; and when, in the evening, one of the chiefs sent his wife to me with a portion which she had prepared as a delicacy to regale us, the odor immediately drove him out of the lodge; and frequently afterwards he used to beg that when those who liked it had taken what they desired, it might be sent away. To others, however, the taste is rather an agreeable one; and I was afterwards always glad when it formed an addition to our scanty meals. It is full of nutriment; and in its unprepared state is said by the Indians to have very strong poisonous qualities, of which it is deprived by a peculiar process, being baked in the ground for about two days."

On the 4th of November they were within hearing of the Falls of the Columbia. The Columbia Indians are described as very inferior. Fremont says :

" In comparison with the Indians of the Rocky Mountains and the great Eastern plain, these are disagreeably dirty in their habits. We were somewhat amused with the scanty dress of one woman, who, in common with the others, rushed out of the huts on our arrival, and who, in default of other covering, used a child for a fig leaf."

A Methodist Missionary Station, about a hundred miles above Fort Vancouver, terminated the Western journey of most of the party, while Fremont himself, with a few men, went down to the Fort, which is within about seventy miles of the Pacific.

The following little incident, narrated under date of November 18th, shows the kind feeling in which the name of Lüders Bay was conceived :

" A gentleman named Lüders, a botanist from the city of Hamburg, arrived at the bay I have called by his name while we were occupied in bringing up the boats. I was delighted to meet at such a place a man of kindred pursuits; but we had only the pleasure of a brief conversation, as his canoe, under the guidance of two Indians, was about to run the rapids, and I could not enjoy the satisfaction of

regaling him with a breakfast, which, after his recent journey, would have been an extraordinary luxury. All of his few instruments and baggage were in the canoe, and he hurried around by land to meet it at the Grave-yard bay; but he was scarcely out of sight when, by the carelessness of the Indians, the boat was drawn into the midst of the rapids, and glanced down the river, bottom up, with the loss of everything it contained. In the natural concern I felt for his misfortune, I gave to the little cove the name of Lüder's Bay."

From the Indians about the missionary station they procured some new animals, and from Vancouver a number of cattle. Altogether, when they started on their return, the 25th day of November, they had 104 mules and horses. Their course was southerly, as their plan was to pursue a new route home. There was at that time a general belief, founded on the reports of trappers, in the existence of a large river having its rise in the Rocky Mountains, and emptying into the Pacific Ocean. Fremont travelled a thousand miles to find it, designing to follow its valley homeward. But the river existed only in the ignorant conjectures of the times. In the progress of their journey, they encountered many difficulties.

*February 4th.*, Fremont writes: "I went ahead early with two or three men, each with a led horse, to break the road. We were obliged to abandon the hollow entirely, and work along the mountain side, which was very steep, and the snow covered with an icy crust. We cut a footing as we advanced, and trampled a road through for the animals; but occasionally one plunged outside the trail, and滑ed along the field to the bottom, a hundred yards below.

"To-night we had no shelter, but we made a large fire around the trunk of one of the huge pines; and covering the snow with small boughs on which we spread our blankets, soon made ourselves comfortable. The night was very bright and clear, though the thermometer was only at  $10^{\circ}$ . A strong wind which sprang up at sundown, made it intensely cold, and this was one of the bitterest nights during the journey.

"Two Indians joined our party here; and one of them, an old man, immediately began to harangue us, saying that ourselves and animals would perish in the snow: and that if we would go back, he would show us another and a better way across the mountain. He spoke in a very loud voice, and there was a singular repetition of phrases and arrangement of words, which rendered his speech striking and not unmusical.

"We had now begun to understand some words, and with the aid of signs, easily comprehended the old man's simple idea. 'Rock upon rock—rock upon rock—snow upon snow—snow upon snow,' said he; 'even if you get over the snow, you will not be able to get down from the mountains.' He made us the sign of precipices, and showed us how the feet of the horses would slip, and throw them off from the narrow trails which led along their sides. Our Chinook, who comprehended even more readily than ourselves, and believed our situation hopeless, covered his head with his blanket, and began to weep and lament. 'I wanted to see the whites,' said he; 'I came away from my own people to see the whites, and I wouldn't care to die among them; but here—' and he looked around into the cold

night and gloomy forest, and, drawing his blanket over his head, began again to lament.

"Seated around the tree, the fire illuminating the rocks, and the tall bolls of the pines round about, and the old Indian haranguing, we presented a group of very serious faces.

*February 5.*—"The night had been too cold to sleep, and we were up very early. Our guide was standing by the fire with all his finery on, and seeing him shiver in the cold, I threw on his shoulders one of my blankets. We missed him a few minutes afterwards, and never saw him again. He had deserted. His bad faith and treachery were in perfect keeping with the estimate of Indian character, which a long intercourse with this people had gradually forced upon my mind.

*February 6.*—"Accompanied by Mr. Fitzpatrick, I set out to-day with a reconnoitering party, on snow-shoes. We marched all in single file, trampling the snow as heavily as we could. Crossing the open basin, in a march of about ten miles, we reached the top of one of the peaks, to the left of the pass indicated by our guide. Far below us, dimmed by the distance, was a large snowless valley, bounded on the western side, at the distance of about a hundred miles, by a low range of mountains, which Carson recognized with delight as the mountains bordering the coast. 'There,' said he, 'is the little mountain—it is fifteen years ago since I saw it; but I am just as sure as if I had seen it yesterday.' Between us, then, and this low coast range was the valley of the Sacramento, and no one who had not accompanied us through the incidents of our life for the last few months, could realize the delight with which at last we looked down upon it. At the distance of apparently thirty miles beyond us were distinguished spots of prairie; and a dark line, which could be traced with the glass, was imagined to be the course of the river; but we were evidently at a great height above the valley, and between us and the plains, extended miles of snowy fields and broken ridges of pine-covered mountains.

"It was late in the day when we turned towards the camp, and it grew rapidly cold as it drew towards night. One of the men became fatigued, and his feet began to freeze, and building a fire in the trunk of a dry old cedar, Mr. Fitzpatrick remained with him until his clothes could be dried, and he was in a condition to come on. After a day's march of twenty miles, we straggled into camp, one after another, at nightfall, the greater number excessively fatigued, only two of the party having ever travelled on snow-shoes before.

*February 13.*—"The meat train did not arrive this evening, and I gave Godey leave to kill our little dog (Tlamath), which he prepared in Indian fashion; scorching off the hair, and washing the skin with soap and snow, and then cutting it up into pieces, which were laid on the snow. Shortly afterwards the sleigh arrived with a supply of horse-meat, and we had to-night an extraordinary dinner—pea-soup, mule, and dog."

One of the men, Charles Towns, became light-headed from hunger and fatigue; and Proveau, the favorite horse of Lieut. Fremont, grew too weak to keep-up, on the 27th of February, and Derosier volunteered, on the 29th, to bring up Proveau, but did not appear at camp with him that night.

*March 1.*, Fremont writes: "We began to be uneasy at Derosier's absence, fearing he might have been bewildered in the woods. Charles Towns, who had not yet recovered his mind, went to swim in the river, as if it were summer, and the stream placid, when it was a cold mountain torrent foaming among

rocks. We were happy to see Derosier appear in the evening. He came in, and sitting down by the fire, began to tell us where he had been. He imagined he had been gone several days, and thought we were still at the camp where he had left us; and we were pained to see that his mind was deranged. It appeared that he had been lost in the mountain, and hunger and fatigue, joined to weakness of body and fear of perishing in the mountains, had crazed him. The times were severe when stout men lost their minds from extremity of suffering—when horses died—and when mules and horses, ready to die of starvation, were killed for food. Yet there was no murmuring or hesitation."

On the 6th of March, Lieut. Fremont, with an advance party, arrived at Sutter's Fort, on the Sacramento river, and were cordially welcomed by Capt. Sutter. The next day, supplied with fresh horses and provisions, they returned to the mountains for the party left behind. The narrative continues:

"On the second day, we met, a few miles below the forks of the Rio de los Americanos; and a more forlorn and pitiable sight than they presented, cannot well be imagined. They were all on foot—each man, weak and emaciated, leading a horse or mule as weak and emaciated as themselves. They had experienced great difficulty in descending the mountains, made slippery by rains and melting snows, and many horses fell over precipices and were killed, and with some were lost the *packs* they carried.

"Out of sixty-seven horses and mules with which we commenced crossing the Sierra, only thirty-three reached the valley of Sacramento, and they only in a condition to be led along."

On the 24th they resumed their journey, with an ample stock of provisions and a large cavalcade of animals, consisting of 130 horses and mules, and about 30 head of cattle, five of which were milch cows.

Lient. Fremont had now made a very important addition to the geographical knowledge of the country, and corrected a material error of long standing. He might well reflect, as he once more turned away from the face of civilized man, that if correct information of the geography of that vast region, should prove as valuable to others as it would have been to him, his labors, however arduous, would not be lost. While they were encamped near Sutter's Fort, Derosier, one of the best men, wandered off and has never since been heard of.

They had been on their homeward journey a month since leaving Sutter's, when on the 25th of April, they discovered that a number of their horses had been driven off by a party of marauding Indians. Three men, Fuentes, Carson, and Godey, went in pursuit. Fuentes came back the same evening, his horse having given out. Carson and Godey did not return until they had performed some bloody work. The journal of the 25th says:—

"In the afternoon of the next day, a war-hoop was heard, such as Indians make when returning from a

victorious enterprise; and soon Carson and Godey appeared, driving before them a band of horses, recognized by Fuentes to be part of those they had lost. Two bloody scalps, dangling from the end of Godey's gun, announced that they had overtaken the Indians as well as the horses. They informed us that after Fuentes left them, from the failure of his horse, they continued the pursuit alone, and towards night-fall entered the mountains, into which the trail led. After sunset the moon gave light, and they followed the trail by moonshine until late in the night, when it entered a narrow defile, and was difficult to follow. Afraid of losing it in the darkness of the defile, they tied up their horses, struck no fire, and lay down to sleep in silence and in darkness. Here they lay from midnight till morning. At daylight they resumed the pursuit, and about sunrise discovered the horses; and immediately dismounting and tying up their own, they crept cautiously to a rising ground which intervened, from the crest of which they perceived the encampment of four lodges close by. They proceeded quietly, and had got within thirty or forty yards of their object, when a movement among the horses discovered them to the Indians; giving the war-shout, they immediately charged into the camp, regardless of the number which the *four* lodges would imply. The Indians received them with a flight of arrows shot from their long bows, one of which passed through Godey's shirt collar, barely missing the neck; our men fired their rifles upon a steady aim, and rushed in. Two Indians were stretched on the ground, fatally pierced with bullets; the rest fled, except a lad that was captured. The scalps of the fallen were instantly stripped off; but in the process one of them, who had two balls through his body, sprung to his feet, the blood streaming from his skinned head, and uttering a hideous howl. An old squaw, possibly his mother, stopped and looked back from the mountain-side she was climbing, threatening and lamenting. The frightful spectacle appalled the stout hearts of our men; but they did what humanity required, and quickly terminated the agonies of the gory savage."

On April 24th, Fremont was surprised by the sudden appearance in his camp of two Mexicans, a man and a boy. The boy, then a handsome lad of eleven years, was Pablo Hernandez, who returned with Fremont, and afterwards lived in the family of Col. Benton, at Washington. They were the only two, of a party of six, who had escaped from a treacherous attack of Indians. On the 29th of April, Capt. Fremont reached the lonely place where the tragedy had been enacted, and he thus describes the scene:

"The dead silence of the place was ominous; and, galloping rapidly up, we found only the corpses of the two men: everything else was gone. They were naked, mutilated, and pierced with arrows. Hernandez had evidently fought, and with desperation. He lay in advance of the willow half-faced tent, which sheltered his family, as if he had come out to meet danger, and to repulse it from that asylum. One of his hands, and both his legs, had been cut off. Giacome, who was a large and strong-looking man, was lying in one of the willow shelters, pierced with arrows. Of the women no trace could be found, and it was evident they had been carried off captive. A little lap-dog, which had belonged to Pablo's mother, remained with the dead bodies, and was frantic with joy at seeing Pablo: he, poor child, was frantic with grief; and filled the air with lamentation."

tations for his father and mother. '*Mi padre! Mi madre!*' was his incessant cry. When we beheld this pitiable sight, and pictured to ourselves the fate of the two women, carried off by savages so brutal and so loathsome, all compunction for the scalped-alive Indian ceased; and we rejoiced that Carson and Godey had been able to give so useful a lesson to these American Arabs, who lie in wait to murder and plunder the innocent traveller."

On the 9th of May, Carson came to Fremont in the afternoon, and reported that Tabéau, who, in the morning, left his fort without the captain's knowledge, and rode back to the camp they had left, in search of a lame mule, had not returned. The narrative goes on to say :

"While we were speaking, a smoke rose suddenly from the cotton wood grove below, which plainly told us what had befallen him; it was raised to inform the surrounding Indians that a blow had been struck, and to tell them to be on their guard. Carson, with several men well mounted, was instantly sent down the river, but returned in the night without tidings of the missing man. They went to the camp we had left, but neither he nor the mule was there. Searching down the river, they found the tracks of the mule, evidently driven along by Indians, whose tracks were on each side of those made by the animal. After going several miles, they came to the mule itself, standing in some bushes, mortally wounded in the side by an arrow, and left to die, that he might be afterwards butchered for food. They also found, in another place, as they were hunting about on the ground for Tabéau's tracks, something that looked like a little puddle of blood, but which the darkness prevented them from verifying. With these details they returned to our camp, and their report saddened all our hearts.

May 10.—"This morning as soon as there was light enough to follow tracks, I set out myself, with Mr. Fitzpatrick and several men, in search of Tabéau. We went to the spot where the appearance of puddled blood had been seen; and this, we saw at once, had been the place where he fell and died. Blood upon the leaves and beaten down bushes, showed that he had got his wound about twenty paces from where he fell, and that he had struggled for his life. He had probably been shot through the lungs with

an arrow. From the place where he lay and bled, it could be seen that he had been dragged to the river bank, and thrown into it. No vestige of what had belonged to him could be found, except a fragment of his horse equipment—horse, gun, clothes—all became the prey of these Arabs of the New World.

"Tabéau had been one of our best men, and his unhappy death spread a gloom over our party. Men, who have gone through such dangers and sufferings as we had seen, become like brothers, and feel each other's loss. To defend and avenge each other, is the deep feeling of all. We wished to avenge his death; but the condition of our horses, languishing for grass and repose, forbade an expedition into unknown mountains. We knew the tribe who had done the mischief—the same which had been insulting our camp. They knew what they deserved, and had the discretion to show themselves to us no more. The day before, they infested our camp; now, not one appeared; nor did we ever afterwards see but one who even belonged to the same tribe, and he at a distance."

On May 23d, François Badean, who had been with Fremont during both his expeditions, and had always been one of his most faithful and efficient men, was killed in drawing towards him a gun by the muzzle; the hammer being caught, discharged the gun, driving the ball through his head.

After an absence of fourteen months, during which, with all their exposure, no case of sickness had ever occurred among them, Col. Fremont and his party arrived at St. Louis on the 6th day of August, 1844. Important additions to the treasures of geographical science had been made by this expedition. The Great Basin, Great Salt Lake, Little Salt Lake, and the Sierra Nevada Mountains had been in part developed. The fact that no rivers issued from the Great Basin had been ascertained; and the non-existence of the river Buenaventura, long laid down on all the maps, and even on the manuscript map of the Hudson's Bay Company, as located by their own hunters, had been conclusively established.

## CHAPTER IV.

**Third Expedition—First Raising of the U. S. Flag in California—Journey to Oregon—Orders received in the Mountains by hand of Capt. Gillespie—Camp attacked by Tlathath Indians in the night—Three men slain—Revenge—Their Village Destroyed—Fremont's Favorite Horse, Sacramento—Saving of Carson's Life—Extracts from Mr. Marcy's Report—Two Hundred of Castro's Horses Captured—Samona Surprised and Taken—Fremont appointed Governor of California—Reliance of the Americans upon Col. Fremont—Arrest of Pico—Sentenced to be Shot—Fremont Pardons him—Ride of Eight Hundred Miles in Eight Days—Desperate Encounter with Grizzly Bears—Twelve Killed—Capitulation of Comenga—Fremont's Proclamation of Peace.**

**I**N January, 1845, Fremont, on the recommendation of Gen. Scott, in a special report, was promoted by a brevet commission of First Lieutenant and a brevet commission of Captain of the corps of Topographical Engineers at the same time.

In the spring of that year, he obtained orders to conduct a third expedition, which com-

prehended in its object a more thorough exploration of the Great Basin, of which he had already obtained considerable knowledge, and of California and Oregon, as well as the discovery of a new and shorter route from the Western base of the Rocky Mountains to the mouth of the Columbia River.

Hunger, thirst, cold, the loss of cattle, the

tomahawk of the Indian, he was destined to encounter again, as he had done in his two previous expeditions. Through all obstacles, he again persevered, and once more reached the Pacific coast.

Capt. Fremont was aware, when he left the United States, that a war with Mexico was probable. On that account he took great pains, when he arrived in California—then a department of Mexico—to apprise Manuel Castro, the commanding general, of the peaceful nature of his mission. He requested liberty to winter in the country. It was granted. Judge of his surprise at receiving shortly afterwards from Castro, an insolent and peremptory order to quit the country forthwith, accompanied by a threat of destruction in case of non-compliance. Fremont had already located the South Pass across the Rocky Mountains; he had ascended a peak where never human feet trod before; he had made many important discoveries in the geography of the West: but he had never yet found out the way to run. He climbed up with his men to the summit of Hawks' Peak, a mountain overlooking the Salinas Plains, which lie between that and Monterey.

A breast-work was hastily thrown up, and the United States flag was hoisted for the first time in California. From this place he wrote the following note to Mr. Larkin, U. S. Consul at Monterey:

"March 10, 1846.

"MY DEAR SIR:—I this moment received your letters, and without waiting to read them, acknowledge the receipt, which the courier requires, immediately.

"I am making myself as strong as possible, in the intention that if we are unjustly attacked, we will fight to extremity, and refuse quarter trusting to our country to avenge our death. No one has reached our camp, and from the heights we are able to see the troops (with the glass) mustering at St. John's and preparing cannon. I thank you for your kindness and good wishes, and would write more at length as to my intentions, did I not fear that my letter would be intercepted. We have in no wise done wrong to the people or the authorities of the country, and if we are hemmed in and assaulted here, we will die every man of us, under the flag of our country."

"Very truly yours,  
"J. C. FREMONT."

Captain Fremont remained on the Peak till the evening of the fourth day, when it being clear that Castro would not attack him in his commanding position,—certainly not without powerful accessions to his own strength, already at least five hundred men—and knowing that it was impossible to obtain provisions for his support, he withdrew, crossed over to the San Joaquin Valley, and slowly and, to use his own language, "growlingly" pursued his journey, by the way of Sacramento Valley, up into the mountain regions of Oregon.

The next incident of particular interest which

occurred to Capt. Fremont, is thus narrated by Col. Benton:

"In the first week of May he was at the north end of the great Tlamath lake, and in Oregon—the lake being cut near its south end by the parallel of 42 degrees north latitude. On the 8th day of that month a strange sight presented itself—almost a startling apparition—two men riding up, and penetrating a region which few ever approached without paying toll of life or blood. They proved to be two of Mr. Fremont's old *voyageurs*, and quickly told their story. They were part of a guard of six men conducting a United States officer, who was on his trail with despatches from Washington, and whom they had left two days back, while they came on to give notice of his approach, and to ask that assistance might be sent him. They themselves had only escaped the Indians by the swiftness of their horses. It was a case in which no time was to be lost, nor a mistake made. Mr. Fremont determined to go himself; and taking ten picked men, four of them Delaware Indians, he took down the western shore of the lake on the morning of the 9th (the direction the officer was to come), and made a ride of sixty miles without a halt. But to meet men, and not to miss them, was the difficult point in this trackless region. It was not the case of a high road, where all travellers must meet in passing each other: at intervals there were places—defiles, or camping grounds—where both parties must pass; and watching for these, he came to one in the afternoon, and decided that, if the party was not killed, it must be there that night. He halted and encamped; and, as the sun was going down, had the inexpressible satisfaction to see the four men approaching. The officer proved to be a lieutenant of the United States Marines, who had been despatched from Washington, the November previous, to make his way by Vera Cruz, the City of Mexico, and Mazatlan, to Monterey, in Upper California, deliver despatches to the United States consul there, and then find Mr. Fremont, wherever he should be. His despatches for Mr. Fremont were only a letter of introduction from the Secretary of State (Mr. Buchanan), and some letters and slips of newspapers from Senator Benton and his family, and some verbal communications from the Secretary of State. The verbal communications were that Mr. Fremont should watch and counteract any foreign scheme on California, and conciliate the good will of the inhabitants towards the United States. Upon this intimation of the government's wishes, Mr. Fremont turned back from Oregon, in the edge of which he was, and returned to California. The letter of introduction was in the common form, that it might tell nothing if it fell into the hands of foes, and signified nothing of itself; but it accredited the bearer, and gave the stamp of authority to what he communicated; and upon this Mr. Fremont acted: for it was not to be supposed that Lieutenant Gillespie had been sent so far, and through so many dangers, merely to deliver a common letter of introduction on the shores of the Tlamath lake."

That night a war party of Tlamath Indians who had followed Gillespie's trail, attacked the camp, and killed three of Fremont's best men—one of them a Delaware Indian. One bold young Flamathe chief paid the penalty of his life on the spot. He fell at the beginning of the fight, leaving his quiver full of unspent arrows.

Capt. Fremont now turned back to meet the remainder of his men, and they encamped together that night. He told them that the

death of their friends who had fallen must be avenged; and the following morning he returned up the West side of the lake, towards the north end, to the principal village of the Tlamaths. His Delawares had painted themselves black, in sign of mourning at the loss of one of their tribe who had been slain, and of the vengeance. Capt. Fremont attacked the Tlamaths, destroyed their village, and after a considerable number of them had been killed, the rest fled.

Capt. Fremont, accompanied by his own party and Gillespie's, now retraced his steps towards California. At this time he was mounted on a noble iron-grey horse, named Sacramento, which he had received as a present from Capt. Sutter, on his second expedition, rode most of the way as far as Kentucky, and left to summer on Col. Benton's farm. This fine animal had borne his owner a large part of this journey out. He was high-spirited, sure-footed, and an almost miraculous leaper. Two days after the massacre, as Capt. Fremont was riding at full speed abreast with Kit Carson and one or two others, his companions crowded him directly on to the top of a large, fallen tree. Carson shouted: "Look out for a fall!" But, with an incredible jump, Sacramento cleared the enormous tree top, and, greeted by a cry of applause from the men, swiftly flew on. They were reconnoitring for a body of Indians who were reported approaching. A quarter of a mile farther on their way, the mettle of the brave courser was put to a different test. They were still beside the Tlamath lake, when they suddenly came upon a small party of Indians. Fremont saw a savage with his bow drawn to the arrow's head, and a deadly aim at Carson, who was standing only ten feet distant, with his rifle levelled at the Indian's head. Carson was pulling at the trigger, when the quick comprehension of Capt. Fremont detected that his gun was only half cocked. A man a little in front of Fremont apparently wavered in resolution. "Get out of the way!" shouted Fremont. The man turned aside. Sacramento dashed on. Fremont's rifle was brought to bear in an instant, and almost the same second with its discharge, the hoofs of the courser trampled the Tlamath in the dust. The balls from the rifles of the Delawares pierced his body, and before the rider of Sacramento could turn round, he heard the heavy war club of Saghundai, the chief, break through his skull. When he turned back, the fierce hand of a Delaware held dangling aloft the gory scalp of the Tlamath Indian. "Them two," says Carson, "Sacramento and the Colonel, saved my life that day."

Sacramento afterwards escaped into a drove of wild horses, and loving freedom like his master, could never be re-taken.

The annual report for 1845, of the Hon. William L. Marcy, then Secretary of War, now Secretary of State, briefly chronicles as follows—quoting from this point—some of the achievements of Col. Fremont in the conquest of California:

[From the Annual Report of the Secretary of War, December 5, 1846.]

[EXTRACT.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, Dec. 5, 1846.

\* \* \* \* \*

At the same time, information reached him that General Castro, in addition to his Indian allies, was advancing in person against him, with artillery and cavalry, at the head of four or five hundred men; that they were passing around the head of the Bay of San Francisco to a rendezvous on the north side of it, and that the American settlers in the valley of the Sacramento were comprehended in the scheme of destruction meditated against his own party.

Under these circumstances, he determined to turn upon his Mexican pursuers, and seek safety both for his own party and the American settlers, not merely in the defeat of Castro, but in the total overthrow of the Mexican authority in California, and the establishment of an independent government in that extensive department. It was on the 6th of June, and before the commencement of the war between the United States and Mexico could have there been known, that this resolution was taken; and by the 5th of July, it was carried into effect by a series of rapid attacks, by a small body of adventurous men, under the conduct of an intrepid leader, quick to perceive and able to direct the proper measures for accomplishing such a daring enterprise.

On the 11th of June, a convoy of 200 horses for Castro's camp, with an officer and 14 men, were surprised and captured by twelve of Fremont's party. On the 15th, at daybreak, the military post of Sonoma was also surprised and taken, with nine brass cannon, two hundred and fifty stand of muskets, and several officers, and some men and munitions of war.

Leaving a small garrison at Sonoma, Colonel Fremont went to the Sacramento to rouse the American settlers; but scarcely had he arrived there, when an express reached him from the garrison at Sonoma, with information that Castro's whole force was crossing the bay to attack that place. This intelligence was received in the afternoon of the 23d of June, while he was on the American fork of the Sacramento, eighty miles from the little garrison at Sonoma; and at two o'clock on the morning of the 25th, he arrived at that place with ninety riflemen from the American settlers in that valley. The enemy had not yet appeared. Scouts were sent out to reconnoitre, and a party of twenty fell in with a squadron of seventy dragoons (all of Castro's force which had crossed the bay), attacked and defeated it, killing and wounding five, without harm to themselves; the Mexican commander, De la Torre, barely escaping with the loss of his transport boats and nine pieces of brass artillery spiked.

The country north of the Bay of San Francisco being cleared of the enemy, Colonel Fremont returned to Sonoma on the evening of the 4th of July, and, on the morning of the 5th, called the people together, explained to them the condition of things in the province, and recommended an immediate declaration of independence. The declaration was made, and he was selected to take the chief direction of affairs.

The attack on Castro was the next object. He was at Santa Clara, an entrenched post on the upper or south side of the Bay of San Francisco, with four

hundred men and two pieces of field artillery. A circuit of more than a hundred miles must be traversed to reach him. On the 6th of July the pursuit was commenced, by a body of one hundred and sixty mounted riflemen, commanded by Colonel Fremont in person, who, in three days, arrived at the American settlements on the Rio de los Americanos. Here he learned that Castro had abandoned Santa Clara, and was retreating south towards Ciudad de los Angeles (the city of the Angels), the seat of the Governor-General of the Californias, and distant four hundred miles. It was instantly resolved on to pursue him to that place. At the moment of departure, the gratifying intelligence was received that war with Mexico had commenced; that Monterey had been taken by our naval force, and the flag of the United States there raised on the 7th of July; and that the fleet would co-operate in the pursuit of Castro and his forces. The flag of independence was hauled down, and that of the United States hoisted, amidst the hearty greetings and to the great joy of the American settlers and the forces under the command of Colonel Fremont.

The combined pursuit was rapidly continued; and on the 12th of August, Commodore Stockton and Colonel Fremont, with a detachment of marines from the squadron and some riflemen, entered the city of the Angels, without resistance or objection; the Governor-General Pico, the Commandant-General Castro, and all the Mexican authorities, having fled and dispersed. Commodore Stockton took possession of the whole country as a conquest of the United States, and appointed Colonel Fremont Governor, under the law of nations; to assume the functions of that office when he should return to the squadron.

Thus, in the short space of sixty days from the first decisive movement, this conquest was achieved, by a small body of men, to an extent beyond their own expectation; for the Mexican authorities proclaimed it a conquest, not merely of the northern part, but of the whole province of the Californias.

The Commandant-General, Castro, on the 9th of August, from his camp at the Mesa, and next day "on the road to Sonora," announced this result to the people, together with the actual flight and dispersion of the former authorities; and, at the same time, he officially communicated the fact of the conquest to the French, English and Spanish consuls in California; and, to crown the whole, the official paper of the Mexican government, on the 16th of October, in laying these official communications before the public, introduced them with the emphatic declaration, "The loss of the Californias is consummated." The whole province was yielded up to the United States, and is now in our military occupancy. \*\*\*

W. L. MARCY.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

On Fremont's return to the Sacramento Valley, he encamped at the Three Buttes, near the junction of the Yuba and Feather rivers. The Buttes are three lofty mountain peaks, rising out of the middle of a vast plain, famous landmarks in California. Here he was joined by the American settlers from all parts of the Valley. They had heard of his danger; of his resolute action at Hawks' Peak, and now that the anger and resentment of the Mexican General were directed equally against them, they were eager to greet Fremont as their champion and leader. "The news travelled," wrote one of them, "with all the speed of the swiftest horses, among all the Americans in a scope of country 150 miles in extent, in 24 hours, and from every direction we rushed to

the assistance of Captain Fremont, under the impression that if he was defeated, we should be taken at our homes, as reported."

On the 27th of October, at Monterey, Fremont received a commission of Lieutenant-Colonel of a rifle regiment, in the army of the United States, signed by President Polk, dated the 29th of the May previous.

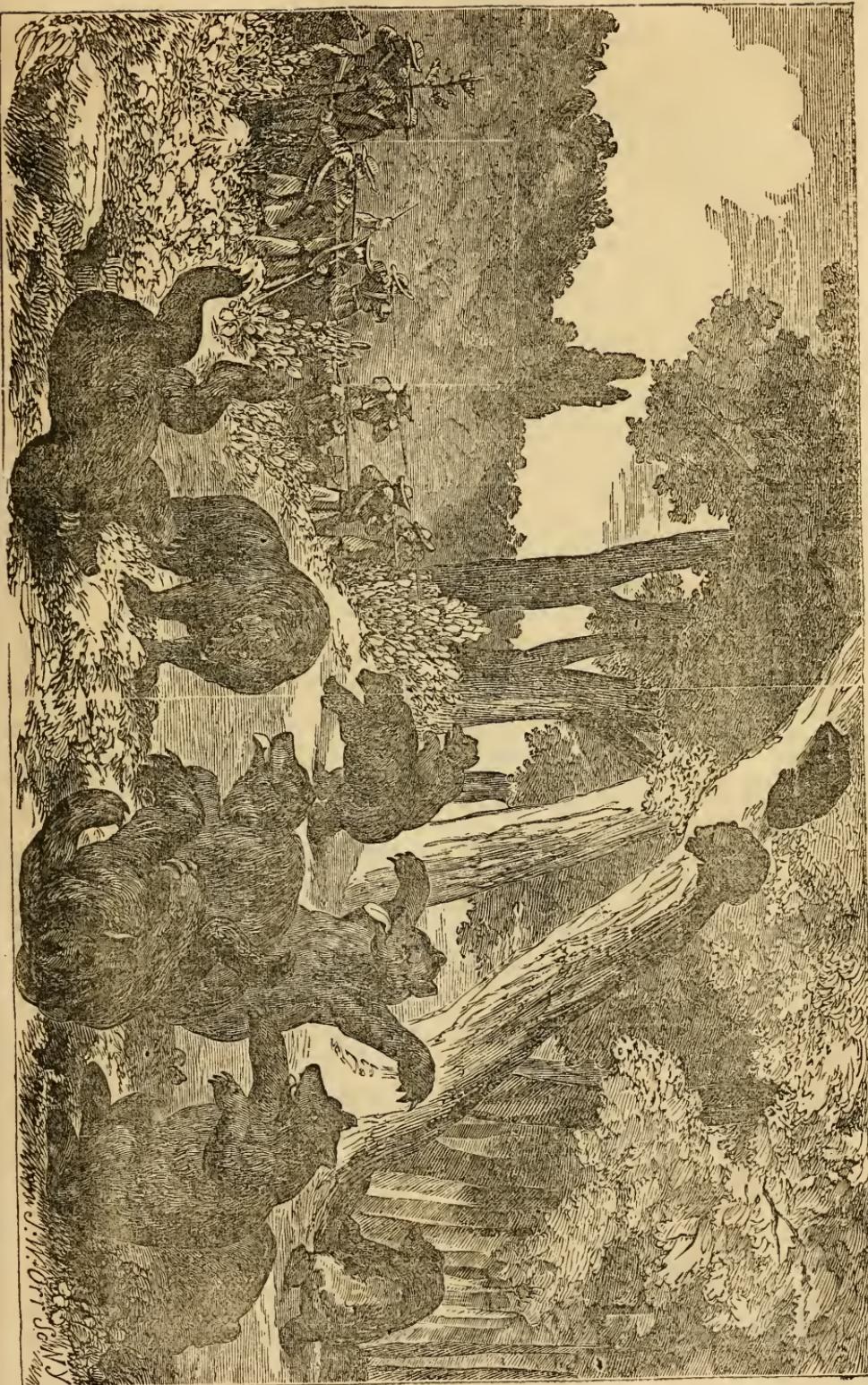
The capture of Sonoma was achieved by a detachment of thirty men dispatched by Col. Fremont for that purpose. The day following, a portion of this detachment appeared in front of Col. Fremont's encampment, on the bank of the American river, bringing with them Vallejo, the Mexican general commanding in the North, whom they had taken prisoner at the surprise of Sonoma, and two other officers. The general stepped forward and tendered to Col. Fremont his sword. The Colonel courteously declined to receive it, in consideration of the superior age of the Mexican general, and of his own desire to conciliate as far as possible the Californians. He sent Gen. Vallejo to Sutter's Fort, where he remained several months a prisoner.

On the 14th of December, 1846, at San Luis Obispo, Don Jose Pico was arrested for breaking his parole. He was tried by a Court Martial and sentenced to be shot. The next morning was to witness his execution. His wife and children supplicated, in the bitterest agony, that his life might be spared. After mature deliberation, Colonel Fremont decided to grant their request. Just before the hour appointed for his execution, this pleasing intelligence was communicated to him. He was overwhelmed. He broke forth into the most enthusiastic expressions of gratitude towards Col. Fremont. His old life, he said, was gone; Col. Fremont had given him a new life; and he vowed for the future, the strictest fidelity. Subsequently, in his own defence before a Court Martial, Col. Fremont thus spoke of this act of pardon:

"That pardon had its influence on all the subsequent events; Don Jose was the cousin of Don Andreas Pico, against whom I was going, and was married to a lady of the Cavillo family; many hearts were conquered the day he was pardoned, and his own, above all. Don Jose Pico attached himself to my person, and remained devoted, and faithful under trying circumstances."

In March, 1847, Col. Fremont accomplished a ride on horseback which seems almost incredible; but the California papers of that date give the full particulars of it. He rode from Los Angeles to Monterey and back again, a distance of eight hundred miles, inside of eight days—all stoppages included. Subsequent measurement has proved the actual distance to be considerably greater even than it was there estimated.

In the autumn of 1846, Col. Fremont was on his way up from Los Angeles to San Fran-



DESPERATE FIGHT WITH GRIZZLY BEARS.

Sc. by  
O. O. S.

cisco, to receive his commission as Governor of California, from Commodore Stockton. He had thirty-six men with him. They were in Salinas Valley. In the cool of the morning, a little after sunrise, Col. Fremont and four or five others were riding leisurely along, a little ahead of the rest of the party, when they discovered three young grizzly bears up some oak trees, apparently eating acorns. There happened to be at hand, leading in the direction of the trees, and past them, a deep, ditch-like gully. They all jumped off their horses and ran along up the gully towards the trees. As they approached, the young bears discovered them, and seeming greatly agitated, commenced running down the trees, and then up again. Col. Fremont and his men were at a loss to understand the meaning of this. As they raised themselves up to shoot they were in their turn somewhat surprised at observing four or five overgrown old bears around the foot of the nearest tree. A bear has a quick eye, and the discovery was mutual. The agitation of the young bears was explained at once. The large ones were too heavy to climb, and it appears, had sent up the young ones, who were industriously engaged in breaking off branches, and throwing them down with the acorns to their parents, who drove them back up the trees as fast as they came down, not then having perceived the cause of their alarm. It was a case now of catching not merely a Tartar, but a good many of them. Fremont and his companions instantly charged upon the large bears. The firing became so rapid that the party in the rear rode up, thinking they were engaged with the Spaniards. Re-inforcements came in on all sides. The bears gathered about as fast as the men. The whole river bottom was covered with branches of willow trees, with open spaces and water holes scattered amongst them. As the men charged upon the bears, a tall Frenchman fell over a large cub, which was trying to hide itself. He screamed, and the bear screamed. As the men heard him, they raised a hearty shout of laughter. The men were now scattered through the willows in every direction, and every bear had a chance, for it was a free fight. The huge creatures repeatedly attempted to charge upon their assailants, but the fire of so many rifles at once, proved too heavy for them. At last, they retired, leaving twelve dead upon the field. In the heat of the encounter, three or four bears had started to charge upon a group of seven or eight men, in which was Col. Fremont. In the suddenness of firing, the men hardly looked to see who was in front of their guns. Jerome Davis, who had just finished loading, and jumped up to fire, threw his head directly in front of the muzzle of Mr. King's rifle, as King was pulling the trigger.

Fremont grabbed Davis by the collar, and jerked him aside, just in season to save his head.

The grizzly bear is, perhaps, the most savage and ferocious animal in the world. They are very tough, and tenacious of life. A single ball rarely kills one. When wounded, they never attempt to fly, but invariably turn upon the hunter. If they can catch the direction, either by the report of the gun or the sight of smoke, they always make for it instantly, and as they can run faster than a man, there is no chance of escape, frequently, but in the trees, which, as already remarked, the old ones are too heavy to climb. It is very dangerous for one man alone to attack a grizzly bear.

Although, in this instance, no quarter was shown to the four-legged enemies thus unexpectedly encountered, a different policy was generally adopted towards other foes.

The negotiation of peace in California was greatly facilitated by the strict regard for the rights of the natives who remained peaceable, which Col. Fremont invariably enforced. He early gave notice that, while he would destroy every house which he found deserted, no man who remained quietly at home should be injured or disturbed. The Californians, after a while, conceived a very high regard for him, and, as soon as hostilities terminated, they were singing his praises in the Spanish language.

The capitulation of Conenga, which put an end to the war, occurred on the 18th of January, 1847. The following proclamation was issued by Col. Fremont:

#### "A CIRCULAR."

"The peace of the country being restored, and future tranquillity vouchsafed by a treaty made and entered into by commissioners respectively appointed by the properly authorized California officers, on the one hand, and by myself, as military commandant of the United States forces in the district of California, on the other; by which a civil government is to take place of the military, and exchange of all prisoners, &c., &c., forthwith ensure to the end that order, and a wholesome civil police, should obtain throughout the land. A copy of which said treaty will be immediately published in the California newspaper published at Monterey.

"Therefore, in virtue of the aforesaid treaty, as well as the functions that in me rest as civil Governor of California, I do hereby proclaim order and peace restored to the country, and require the immediate release of all prisoners, the return of the civil officers to their appropriate duties, and as strict an obedience of the military to the civil authority as is consistent with the security of peace, and the maintenance of good order where troops are garrisoned.

"Done at the capitol of the Territory of California, temporarily seated at the Ciudad de los Angeles, this 22d day of January, A. D., 1847.

"J. C. FREMONT.

"Governor and Commander-in-Chief of California.

"Witness.—W. H. RUSSELL,  
"Secretary of State."

## CHAPTER V.

**Arrest of Col. Fremont—Trial before a Court-Martial—His Defence—Conviction—Resigns his Commission.**

**A**S Scott came home after his brilliant victories in Mexico, so Fremont returned from the conquest of California, under arrest!

Gen. Kearney and Commodore Stockton quarrelled about their respective rank and authority. Both required obedience to their orders from Col. Freinont. He could go as fast and as far as any man in one direction; but he could not move two ways at the same time. The consequence was, that, although he had served his country faithfully, and had achieved a great conquest, he was now placed in jeopardy, not of the loss of his commission only, but of his life also!

The court-martial for his trial assembled in Washington in January, 1848.

Before the court Col. Freinont stood charged with, 1. MUTINY; 2. DISOBEDIENCE OF ORDERS; 3. CONDUCT PREJUDICIAL TO GOOD ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.

After stating to the court that his case was one which required "justice and not kindness," Col. Fremont proceeded to say:

"A subordinate in rank, as in the contest, long and secretly marked out for prosecution by the commanding general, assailed in newspaper publications when three thousand miles distant, and standing for more than two months before this court, to hear all that could be sworn against my private honor as well as against my official conduct, I come at last to the right to speak for myself.

"I ask this court to believe that the preservation of a commission is no object of my defence. It came to me, as did those which preceded it, without asking, either by myself or by any friend in my behalf. But I have a name which was without a blemish before I received that commission; and that name it is my intention to defend."

Goaded by persecution to the necessity of referring to his own exploits, he does it with characteristic modesty and reserve. He finds occasion, as he proceeds, to contrast the valor of his men with the ingratitude and neglect which had been their only compensation, and his simple narrative flashes into burning eloquence :

"On Christmas day, 1846," he says, "we struggled on the Santa Barbara Mountain in a tempest of chilling rains and winds, in which a hundred horses perished, but the men stood to it, and I mention it to their honor. They deserve that mention, for they are not paid yet."

Unnecessary destruction of property and of life has too often marked the progress of the conquering hero. The sublime spectacle of courage and humanity walking hand in hand, is not the usual characteristic of war. Col. Fremont never for a moment forgot that conquest, and not carnage, was the great object to

be achieved. "A corps of observation," he remarks, "of some fifty or a hundred horsemen, galloped about us, without doing or receiving harm; for it did not come within my policy to have any of them killed." His was the skill and the glory finally to obtain a decisive victory without bloodshed. This achievement and its valuable results, he thus briefly sets forth before the court:

"We entered the plain of Couenga, occupied by the enemy in considerable force, and I sent in a summons to them to lay down their arms, or fight at once. The chiefs desired a parley with me in person. I went alone to see them (Don Jose Pico only being with me). They were willing to capitulate to me; the terms were agreed upon. Commissioners were sent out on both sides to put it into form. It received the sanction of the governor and the commander-in-chief, Commodore Stockton, and was reported to the Government of the United States. It was the capitulation of Couenga. It put an end to the war, and to the feelings of war. It tranquillized the country, and gave safety to every American from the day of its conclusion.

"My march from Monterey to Los Angeles, which we entered on the 14th of January, was a subject for gratulation. A march of four hundred miles through an insurgent country, without spilling a drop of blood—conquering by clemency and justice—and so gaining the hearts of all that, until troubles came on from a new source, I could have gone back, alone and unarmed, upon the trail of my march; trusting for life and bread to those alone among whom I had marched as conqueror, and whom I have been represented as plundering and oppressing!"

He finished his defence as follows:

"My acts in California have all been with high motives, and a desire for the public service. My scientific labors did something to open California to the knowledge of my countrymen; its geography had been a sealed book. My military operations were conquests without bloodshed; my civil administration was for the public good. I offer California, during my administration, for comparison with the most tranquil portions of the United States; I offer it in contrast to the condition of New Mexico during the same time. I prevented civil war against Governor Stockton, by refusing to join General Kearney against him; I arrested civil war against myself, by consenting to be deposed—offering at the same time to resign my place of lieutenant-colonel in the army.

"I have been brought as a prisoner and a criminal from that country. I could return to it, after this trial is over, without rank or guards, and without molestation from the people, except to be impetrated for the money which the government owes them.

"I am now ready to receive the sentence of the court."

Of course Col. Fremont was convicted. The spirit of persecution which could arraign him under such circumstances, took care to secure a verdict of guilty. President Polk expressed the opinion that the charge of mutiny was

not sustained; and remitted the sentence of dismissal from the service. But Col. Fremont immediately resigned his commission. After a long delay and a second demand from him, the resignation was accepted. Fremont did not want clemency; he wanted only justice, and was willing to wait calmly and patiently till it should come.

## CHAPTER VI.

**Fourth Expedition—Misled by his Guide—Terrible Sufferings—Loss of Animals and Men—Arrival in California—Engages in Gold Digging—Helps to make California a Free State—Elected to the United States Senate.**

FREMONT was now his own man; and he was the same in spite of the persecutions which he had endured, with his spirit unbroken, and his resolution unsubdued.

As early as the expeditions in which he accompanied Mr. Nicollet, Mr. Fremont conceived the idea of a railroad to the Pacific. He saw the grand opening for trade in that direction, and the importance of improved facilities for carrying it on. On his first visit to California, he had determined to make that country his future home. He now devoted himself anew, without the aid of government, to developing the practicability of a railroad route from the eastern to the western side of the continent.

On the 19th of October, 1848, Mr. Fremont started on his fourth expedition. This was fitted out on the frontiers of Missouri. Some friends of Col. Fremont in St. Louis, prompted partly by their interest in a railroad to the Pacific, and partly by a desire to manifest their disapprobation of the result of the Court Martial, defrayed for the time being, the expense, which ultimately fell chiefly upon Mr. Fremont himself.

Col. Fremont now set out for California as an emigrant, having made up his mind fully to cast his lot in that State, and he projected this fourth expedition, principally to ascertain whether the snows formed an impracticable barrier to railroad travel in the mountain regions in the winter. Mrs. Fremont accompanied him into what is now Kansas Territory. A domestic affliction occurred at the commencement of the journey, which added to the sadness inseparable from such a parting. On their way up the river, above St. Louis, they lost one of their children, an infant boy.

Of the hardships and sufferings to which Col. Fremont was subjected, before he reached New Mexico, a vivid idea may be formed from the following extracts of a letter to his wife:

TAOS, NEW MEXICO, January 27, 1849.

MY VERY DEAR WIFE:

I write to you from the house of our good friend Carson.

\* \* \* \* \*

Former letters have made you acquainted with our

journey so far as Bent's Fort, and from report you will have heard the circumstances of our departure from the Upper Pueblo of the Arkansas. We left that place about the 25th of November, with upwards of a hundred good mules and one hundred and thirty bushels of shelled corn, intended to support our animals across the snow of the high mountains, and down to the lower parts of the Grand River tributaries, where usually the snow forms no obstacle to winter travelling. At the Pueblo, I had engaged as a guide an old trapper, well known as "Bill Williams," and who had spent some twenty-five years of his life in trapping various parts of the Rocky Mountains. The error of our journey was committed in engaging this man. He proved never to have in the least known, or entirely to have forgotten, the whole region of country through which we were to pass. We occupied more than half a month in making the journey of a few days, blundering a tortuous way through deep snow which already began to choke up the passes, for which we were obliged to waste time in searching. About the 11th December we found ourselves at the north of the Del Norte Cañon, where that river issues from the St. John's Mountain, one of the highest, most rugged and impracticable of all the Rocky Mountain ranges, inaccessible to trappers and hunters even in the summer time. Across the point of this elevated range our guide conducted us, and having still great confidence in his knowledge, we pressed onwards with fatal resolution. Even along the river bottoms the snow was already belly deep for the mules, frequently snowing in the valley and almost constantly in the mountains. The cold was extraordinary; at the warmest hours of the day (between one and two) the thermometer (Fahrenheit) standing in the shade of only a tree trunk at zero; the day sunshiny, with a moderate breeze. We pressed up towards the summit, the snow deepening; and in four or five days reached the naked ridges which lie above the timbered country, and which form the dividing grounds between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Along these naked ridges, it storms nearly all winter, and the winds sweep across them with remorseless fury. On our first attempt to cross, we encountered a *poudrière* (dry snow driven thick through the air by violent wind, and in which objects are visible only at a short distance), and were driven back, having some ten or twelve men variously frozen, face, hands or feet. The guide came nigh being frozen to death here, and dead mules were already lying about the fires. Meantime, it snowed steadily. The next day we made mauls, and beating a road or trench through the snow, crossed the crest in defiance of the *poudrière*, and encamped immediately below in the edge of the timber. The trail showed as if a defeated party had passed by; pack-saddles and packs, scattered articles of clothing, and dead mules strewed along. A continuance of stormy weather paralyzed all movement. We were encamped somewhere about 12,000 feet above the sea. Westward, the country was buried in deep snow. It was impossible to advance, and to turn back was

equally impracticable. We were overtaken by sudden and inevitable ruin. It so happened that the only places where any grass could be had were the extreme summit of the ridges, where the sweeping winds kept the rocky ground bare and the snow could not lie. Below these, animals could not get about, the snow being deep enough to bury them. Here, therefore, in the full violence of the storms we were obliged to keep our animals. They could not be moved either way. It was instantly apparent that we should lose every animal.

I determined to recross the mountain more towards the open country, and haul, or pack the baggage (by men) down to the Del Norte. With great labor the baggage was transported across the crest to the head springs of a little stream leading to the main river. A few days were sufficient to destroy our fine band of mules. They generally kept huddled together, and as they froze, one would be seen to tumble down and the snow would cover him; sometimes they would break off and rush down towards the timber until they were stopped by the deep snow, where they were soon hidden by the *poudreie*. The courage of the men failed fast; in fact, I have never seen men so soon discouraged by misfortune as we were on this occasion; but, as you know, the party was not constituted like the former ones. But among those who deserve to be honorably mentioned, and who behaved like what they were—men of the old exploring party—were Godey, King, and Taplin; and first of all Godey. In this situation, I determined to send in a party to the Spanish settlements of New Mexico, for provisions and mules, to transport our baggage to Taos. With economy, and after we should leave the mules, we had not two weeks' provisions in the camp. These consisted of a store which I had reserved for a hard day—macaroni and bacon. From among the volunteers, I chose King, Brackenridge, Creutzfeldt, and the guide Williams; the party under the command of King. In case of the least delay at the settlements, he was to send me an express. In the meantime, we were to occupy ourselves in removing the baggage and equipage down to the Del Norte, which we reached with our baggage in a few days after their departure (which was the day after Christmas). Like many a Christmas for years back, mine was spent on the summit of a wintry mountain; my heart filled with gloomy and anxious thoughts—with none of the merry faces and pleasant luxuries that belong to that happy time. You may be sure we contrasted much this with the last at Washington, and speculated much on your doings, and made many warm wishes for your happiness. Could you have looked into Agrippa's glass for a few moments only! You remember the volumes of Blackstone which I took from your father's library when we were overlooking it at our friend Brant's? They made my Christmas amusements. I read them, to pass the heavy time and forget what was around me. Certainly you may suppose that my first law lessons will be well remembered. Day after day passed by and no news from our express party. Snow continued to fall almost incessantly on the mountain. The spirits of the camp grew lower. Proue laid down in the trail and froze to death. In a sunshiny day, and having with him means to make a fire, he threw his blanket down in the trail, and laid there till he froze to death. After sixteen days had elapsed from King's departure, I became so uneasy at the delay, that I decided to wait no longer. I was aware that our troops had been engaged in hostilities with the Spanish Utahs and Apaches, who range in the North River valley, and became fearful that they (King's party) had been cut off by these Indians; I could imagine no other accident. Leaving the camp employed with the baggage, and in charge of Mr. Vincenthaler, I started down the river with a small party consisting of Godey (with his

young nephew), Mr. Preuss and Saunders. We carried our arms and provisions for two or three days. In the camp the messes had provisions for two or three meals, more or less, and about five pounds of sugar to each man. Failing to meet King, my intention was to make the Red River settlement, about twenty-five miles north of Taos, and send back the speediest relief possible. My instructions to the camp were, that if they did not hear from me within a stated time, they were to follow down the Del Norte.

On the second day after leaving camp we came upon a fresh trail of Indians,—two lodges, with a considerable number of animals. This did not lessen our uneasiness for our people. As their trail when we met it turned and went down the river, we followed it. On the fifth we surprised an Indian on the ice of the river. He proved to be a Utah, son of a Grand River chief, we had formerly known, and behaved to us in a friendly manner. We encamped near them at night. By a present of a rifle, my two blankets, and other promised rewards when we should get in, I prevailed upon this Indian to go with us as a guide to the Red River settlement, and take with him four of his horses, principally to carry our little baggage. These were wretchedly poor, and could get along only in a very slow walk. On that day (the sixth) we left the lodges late, and travelled only some six or seven miles. About sunset we discovered a little smoke, in a grove of timber off from the river, and thinking perhaps it might be our express party on its return, we went to see. This was the twenty-second day since they had left us, and the sixth since we had left the camp. We found them,—three of them,—Creutzfeldt, Brackenridge, and Williams,—the most miserable objects I have ever seen. I did not recognize Creutzfeldt's features when Brackenridge brought him up to me and mentioned his name. They had been starving. King had starved to death a few days before. His remains were some six or eight miles above, near the river. By aid of the horses, we carried these three with us to Red River settlement, which we reached (Jan. 20) on the tenth evening after leaving our camp in the mountains, having travelled through snow and on foot one hundred and sixty miles. I look upon the anxiety which induced me to set out from the camp as an inspiration. Had I remained there waiting the party which had been sent in, every man of us would probably have perished.

The morning after reaching the Red River town, Godey and myself rode on to the Rio Hondo and Taos, in search of animals and supplies, and on the second evening after that on which we had reached Red River, Godey had returned to that place with about thirty animals, provisions, and four Mexicans, with which he set out for the camp on the following morning. On the road he received eight or ten others which were turned over to him by the orders of Major Beale, the commanding officer of this northern district of New Mexico. I expect that Godey will reach this place with the party on Wednesday evening, the 31st. From Major Beale I received the offer of every aid in his power, and such actual assistance as he was able to render. Some horses which he had just recovered from the Utahs were loaned to me, and he supplied me from the commissary's department with provisions which I could have had nowhere else. I find myself in the midst of friends. With Carson is living Owens, and Maxwell is at his father-in-law's, doing a very prosperous business as a merchant and contractor for the troops.

\* \* \* \* \*

Monday, 29th.—My letter now assumes a journal form. No news yet from the party,—a great deal of falling weather; rain and sleet here, and snow in the mountains.

\* \* \* \* \*

I am anxiously waiting to hear, in much uncertainty as to their fate. My presence kept them together and quiet; my absence may have a bad effect. When we overtook King's starving party, Brackenridge said he "would rather have seen me than his father." He felt himself safe.

TAOS, NEW MEXICO, Feb. 6, 1849.

After a long delay, which had wearied me to the point of resolving to set out again myself, tidings have at last reached me from my ill-fated party. Mr. Haler came in last night, having, the night before, reached Red River settlement, with some three or four others. Including Mr. King and Proue, we have lost eleven of our party. Occurrences, after I left them, are briefly these, so far as they are within Haler's knowledge.

\* \* \* \* \*

You will remember that I had left the camp with occupation sufficient to employ them for three or four days, after which they were to follow me down the river. Within that time I had expected the relief from King, if it was to come at all.

They remained where I had left them seven days, and then started down the river. Manuel—you will remember Manuel, the Consurie Indian—gave way to a feeling of despair after they had travelled about two miles, begged Haler to shoot him, and then turned and made his way back to the camp; intending to die there, as he doubtless did. They followed our trail down the river—twenty-two men they were in all. About ten miles below the camp, Wise gave out, threw away his gun and blanket, and a few hundred yards further, fell over into the snow and died. Two Indian boys, young men, countrymen of Manuel, were behind. They rolled up Wise in his blanket, and buried him in the snow on the river bank. No more died that day—none the next. Carver raved during the night, his imagination wholly occupied with images of many things which he fancied himself eating. In the morning, he wandered off from the party, and probably soon died. They did not see him again. Sorel on this day gave out, and laid down to die. They built him a fire, and Morin, who was in a dying condition, and snow-blind, remained. These two did not probably last till morning. That evening, I think, Hubbard killed a deer. They travelled on, getting here and there a grouse, but probably nothing else, the snow having frightened off the game. Things were desperate, and brought Haler to the determination of breaking up the party, in order to prevent them from living upon each other. He told them "that he had done all he could for them, that they had no other hope remaining than the expected relief, and that their best plan was to scatter, and make the best of their way in small parties down the river. That, for his part, if he was to be eaten, he would, at all events, be found travelling when he did die." They accordingly separated. With Mr. Haler continued five others and the two Indian boys. Rohrer now became very despondent; Haler encouraged him by recalling to mind his family, and urged him to hold out a little longer. On this day he fell behind, but promised to overtake them at evening. Haler, Scott, Hubbard, and Martin agreed that if any one of them should give out, the others were not to wait for him to die, but build a fire for him and push on. At night, Kern's mess encamped a few hundred yards from Haler's, with the intention, according to Taplin, to remain where they were until the relief should come, and in the meantime to live upon those who had died, and upon the weaker ones as they should die. With the three Kerns were Cathcart, Andrews, McKie, Stepperfeldt, and Taplin.

Ferguson and Beadle had remained together behind. In the evening, Rohrer came up and remained

with Kern's mess. Mr. Haler learnt afterwards from that mess that Rohrer and Andrews wandered off the next day, and died. They say they saw their bodies. In the morning, Haler's party continued on. After a few hours, Hubbard gave out. They built him a fire, gathered him some wood, and left him, without, as Haler says, turning their heads to look at him as they went off. About two miles further, Scott—you remember Scott, who used to shoot birds for you at the frontier—gave out. They did the same for him as for Hubbard, and continued on. In the afternoon the Indian boys went ahead, and before nightfall met Godey with the relief. Haler heard and knew the guns which he fired for him at night, and starting early in the morning, soon met him. I hear that they all cried together like children. Haler turned back with Godey, and went with him to where they had left Scott. He was still alive, and was saved; Hubbard was dead—still warm. From the Kerns' mess, they learned the death of Andrews and Rohrer, and a little above met Ferguson, who told them that Beadle had died the night before.

Godey continued on with a few New Mexicans and pack mules, to bring down the baggage from the camp. Haler, with Martin and Bacon, on foot, and bringing Scott on horseback, have first arrived at the Red River settlement. Provisions and horses for them to ride were left with the others, who preferred to rest on the river until Godey came back.

\* \* \* \* \*

Very affectionately,

J. C. FREMONT.

At Taos, Col. Fremont re-fitted his party, borrowed money of friends who appreciated him, and after about a fortnight pushed on. He followed the valley of the Del Norte down nearly to the northern line of Mexico, then diverged to the south-west, through the Apache country, and arrived in California the latter part of March. When he got to the Spanish towns on the Santa Cruz river, he fell in with large parties of rancheros—extensive graziers—well mounted and fitted out, on their way to California, to dig gold. They applied to Col. Fremont to take command of them, as they were constantly apprehensive of attacks from the Indians. He declined the command, but consented to travel with them, and render them any aid he could. The Indians at that time were extremely hostile to the Mexicans, and committed constant depredations upon their property. When Colonel Fremont arrived in California a considerable number of them requested permission to accompany him to Mariposa, and go to digging gold on his land at the halves. To this proposition he agreed, and they went to work. At the end of one month they divided about one hundred pounds of gold. From May till winter Col. Fremont was in Mariposa, and the towns below. Mrs. Fremont had arrived in June, by the way of the Isthmus.

Pending the formation of a State Constitution, he exerted a steady and powerful influence to make California a free State.

In December, he was elected to the United States Senate.

## CHAPTER VII.

Draws the Short Term—Extraordinary Amount of Work which he Accomplished in the Senate in Twenty-one Days—Favors the Cause of Education—Advocates the Rights of the Masses against Government Monopoly—His Votes.

**D**R. GWIN was elected to the U. S. Senate with Col. Fremont. In drawing lots for the long and short terms—they being the first senators from the State—Col. Fremont got the short term; and as he did not return to the short session, he was actually in the Senate chamber only 21 working days. In that short period of time he performed an amount of useful work which would have been a fair result for six years of senatorial service. He introduced eighteen important bills, among which were:

- I.—A Bill to Regulate the Working of the Mines in California.
- II.—A Bill to Grant said State Public Lands for Purposes of Education.
- III.—A Bill to Grant Six Townships for an University.
- IV.—A Bill to Grant Lands for Asylums for the Deaf and Dumb, for the Blind and Insane.
- V.—A Bill to Provide for Opening a Road Across the Continent.

In an elaborate speech on his Bill to Regulate the Working of the Mines, Mr. Fremont said:

"The principles of this bill, as I have already stated them, are to exclude all idea of making a national revenue out of these mines, to prevent the possibility of monopolies by moneyed capitalists, and to give to NATURAL CAPITAL, that is to say, to LABOR and INDUSTRY, a fair chance to work, and the secure enjoyment of what they find."

On a proposition to substitute for the bill abolish the Slave Trade, a bill abolishing Slavery in the District of Columbia, he voted *Nay*. The vote stood, Yeas 5, Nays 45.

On a bill to suppress the Slave trade in the District of Columbia, he voted *Yea*.

On a bill to punish any person who should entice or induce a slave to run away, by confinement in the District Penitentiary five years, he voted *Nay*.

On a bill to authorize the corporations in the District to prohibit free negroes under penalty of fine and imprisonment, he voted *Nay*.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Engaged in the Cattle business—Goes to England—Imprisoned for a Debt of the Government.

**A**FTER 144 ballots, Col. Fremont was defeated as a candidate for re-election to the Senate, in 1851. He was too strongly anti-slavery for the State at that time.

Not long after this he went to his Mariposa estate, and engaged in cattle raising. About this time treaties were negotiated between the U. S. Commissioners, appointed for that purpose, and the Indian tribes in California, by the terms of which the Indians were to be supplied with large amounts of beef. The commissioners advertised for proposals, and Col. Fremont obtained a heavy contract, under which he actually furnished several thousand head of cattle. It was only after a long controversy, and by carrying the case before Congress, that he obtained his pay, in 1854. In committee of the whole, and through the House, the appropriation passed without one objection being raised to it. The next day it passed the Senate.

In March, 1852, Col. Fremont went with his family to Europe. He was absent a year and-a-half.

While in London, in April, soon after his

arrival, just as he was leaving the Clarendon Hotel to attend a dinner party, he was arrested for an obligation incurred by him, when in the service of the government, and on its account, while acting as governor of California, to clothe his battalion and enable them to return home. He had just handed Mrs. Fremont into a carriage, and was about getting in himself, when four Bow Street officers stepped up to him, and said: "We arrest you, sir, for debt." Their manner was insolent in the extreme. A solicitor's clerk equally rude, accompanied them. They conducted Col. Fremont to what is called a Sponging House. Here he remained locked up till the next morning; his American friends rushed to him, and offered to pay the heavy bribe which the officers demanded to let him go the evening of his arrest; but Col. Fremont objected. He bore the annoyance with perfect composure, and the next morning the requisite bail was furnished, and he was released. Possibly he dreamed that night of an administration under which private citizens and faithful soldiers would not be imprisoned for debts of the government.

## CHAPTER IX.

Fifth Expedition—The Cochatope Pass—Reduced to living on Horse Meat—Short Allowance—Mr. Fuller gives out—Col. Fremont in a Critical Position—Hauling a Man up the Mountain—They reach an Indian Camp—Death of Mr. Fuller—Arrival at Parawana—The Whites unable to Proceed—Fremont goes on with the Delawares—Desperate Descent upon Horse Thief Indians—Reach California.

**UNDISMAYED** by the catastrophes of his last previous expedition, Col. Fremont was still determined to explore the Cochatope Pass in mid-winter, and ascertain by his own observation whether the snows were so deep as to render rail-road travel impracticable through it at that season.

In the fall of 1853, he fitted out another expedition at the great expense of himself and Col. Benton.

He went with his men to the frontiers in September, but found himself so much prostrated by the remains of fever, as to make it necessary for him to return to St. Louis for medical advice. His party went on to Salt Creek, in the Buffalo region, about two hundred miles beyond Westport, and there remained encamped, until he rejoined them on the last day of October.

On the 14th of December, they went through the Cochatope Pass, and, although it was an unusually severe winter, found only four inches of snow on the level. The access was easy, described by Fremont as about like the ascent to the White House at Washington. They had begun at this time to get short of provisions; and serious troubles awaited them farther on.

A few days after emerging from the pass, they were obliged to ascend a very steep mountain, covered at the time, with snow, three or four feet deep. The head mule packed with the buffalo robes of the camp, had got up about two hundred feet, when his hind legs sank down into the snow, so deep that he tumbled over, and turning somerset after somerset, came down to the base of the mountain. In his descent he brought down nearly all the animals, fifty-four in number, many of them with riders. They all came tumbling down together, rolling over and over. One mule and one horse were killed. The next morning they succeeded in ascending the mountain, and encamped upon its summit, where the snow was four feet deep. That night, the thermometer sank to 30° below zero. The men stood to their waists in the snow, guarding the animals, to prevent their running away, because there was nothing for them to eat.

In going down the other side of the mountain the day following, they broke their large tent pole, and were consequently obliged to sleep in the open air upon the snow, with no covering but their blankets, after that.

About the first of January, they were reduced to horse flesh, as their only food; and it became necessary to put them on a short allowance even of this. Mr. Carvalho, of Baltimore, who accompanied Col. Fremont as daguerreotypist, gives the following account of their condition about this time:

"When an animal gave out, so that he could not proceed any further, he was shot down by the Indians with us, who immediately cut his throat, and saved all the blood, which, when boiled, served, together with the entrails, as the meal for the whole party. The animal was carefully divided into twenty-two parts—two parts were given to Colonel Fremont and his cook, ten parts to the white camp, and ten parts to the Delawares. No part of the animal was suffered to be wasted; the bones were partially burnt to afford some little employment to the teeth, which were becoming dull from disuse. The hide was also divided in equal proportions by the man whose duty it was to officiate as cook. The passions of the men were so distorted by their privations, that they were not satisfied with the cook's division of the hide; but one man turned his back, while another asked him who was to have this piece, and that, and so on, until all was divided. The same process was gone through with in regard to the horse-soup, which, when made with the entrails, 'shaken well,' and boiled in snow, possessed a flavor peculiar to itself, and readily distinguished from the various preparations made by the celebrated 'Ude,' of gastronomic memory. The hide was roasted so as to burn off the hair and make it crisp, the hoofs and shins were disposed of by regular rotation.

"Our work was never done. When we got to camp, all the men off duty were dispatched to gather fire-wood to burn during the night. One might be seen with a decayed trunk on his shoulder, while a half dozen others were using their combined efforts to bring into camp some dried tree. Colonel Fremont himself joined the men a. times, and whenever it was peculiarly difficult, in procuring the necessary material to prevent us from freezing while we were in camp.

"The men all laid out in the open air without covering except their blankets and robes. I have been awakened to go on guard in the morning watch, when looking around, my companions appeared like so many graves, covered with eight to twelve inches of fresh snow. Some of the animals would eat the snow, while others would not. To keep them alive, we had to melt snow in our camp kettles, and give it them to drink, which process was attended with much fatigue and trouble. The animals most generally were turned out on the snow, to gather what they could find; some of them, in their search after grass, wandered a considerable distance from camp.

"We lived on horse meat fifty days. At the beginning of the time, Colonel Fremont addressed us in a few words on the prospect which was before us; he told us that it depended on ourselves whether we should get through the difficulties, which he frankly admitted would be great and dreadful, that we must now inevitably encounter. He exhorted us to resolution and perseverance. He informed us that on his

last expedition, a detachment of men whom he had sent for succor had been guilty of eating one of their number. He expressed his abhorrence of the act, and in conclusion told us that he would shoot the first man who should propose, under any circumstances, that we should eat each other."

The Grand River, the Eastern branch of the Colorado, never having been explored nor laid down on any map, Col. Fremont was very desirous to examine it. He followed the stream down about one hundred miles. The abrupt banks of the stream, composed of various colored sandstone, rise to the height of several hundred feet, and the serpentine course of the river rendered repeated crossings necessary. Leaving the Grand River, after following it for nearly a fortnight—passing over a divide of forty or fifty miles entirely destitute of grass and water, they reached a fertile little spot on the Green River, the western part of the Colorado, at which was an encampment of Indians. The sight of an Indian camp raised hopes in the minds of the half-famished travellers of finding food, but these miserable savages lived on fine grass seed in the winter, only a small quantity of which could be obtained from them. Shortly after crossing Green River, Mr. Fuller, of St. Louis, a tall, large and powerful looking man, who had already crossed the plains to California, principally on foot, suddenly showed signs of exhaustion. He was a favorite with the men, and those who were with him helped him on, until he said he could go no farther, and he begged them to proceed to the camp and procure some nourishment and bring back, as he was starving. He was left wrapt in his blue blankets lying on the snow. It was a barren waste, and no wood could be procured for a fire. At ten o'clock they arrived at camp, and reported to Col. Fremont the facts. He sent back a Mexican named Frank, with the two best mules and some cooked horse meat, to find Mr. Fuller. Of course, the whole party were almost perfectly exhausted; but no eye, of Indian or white, closed in sleep that night, and at short intervals, the solemn stillness in which they were held by the long agony of suspense was broken by their commander's voice, inquiring from his tent of the guard, for the missing man. Morning broke, and neither Mr. Fuller nor the Mexican who had been sent after him, had appeared. Three of the Delawares on three of the strongest animals were dispatched in quest of the two lost men. About ten o'clock, one of the Delawares brought in Frank, who reported that he had missed his way, and had nearly frozen to death. About four in the afternoon, the other two Delawares appeared with Mr. Fuller, one supporting him on each side, as he was too weak to sit on his horse without assistance. The men all gathered round Mr.

Fuller, weeping like so many children, overcome with joy at his recovery. He had kept his eyes open through the whole dreary night, for he knew that to him sleep and death would be one. His feet and ankles were black with frost. On Mr. Fuller's account, the whole of the party remained at this encampment nearly three days, and as long as he lived, every man in his mess, of his own accord, cut from his scanty allowance of horse meat a slice to add to Mr. Fuller's portion.

About the first of February, the horses and mules had become so much reduced, that Col. Fremont was obliged to make a *caché* (deposit under ground) of the daguerreotype apparatus, and every other article that could be dispensed with.

Col. Fremont had been tramping for a long time ahead of his party, with the Delaware, Solomon, by his side, breaking track through the deep snow. It was afternoon. They were on a steep mountain side, toiling slowly up, when, for the first and only time in all his expeditions, Col. Fremont himself, suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, felt his strength give way. He could not move. He comprehended, in an instant, the crisis. He knew that the fate, not of himself only, but of the whole party, depended upon his action at that moment. Noticing that there was a clear spot amid some trees near by, he remarked to Solomon, that it was a good place to encamp. No one noticed that he could not move; no one ever knew it. They stopped there that night, and the next morning, refreshed by the inherent strength of his own will more than by the dry horse meat which was his only food, he led forward his half-starved men.

The snows were deep. Before this week had passed, another critical time came on. An unsuccessful attempt had been made to break through the snow. At night a council was held by Fremont, Wolfe the Indian chief, and Solomon. The Chief spoke first. It was impossible, he said; they could not get over the mountain. Solomon silently looked up to the Colonel for a reply. "That is not the point," said Col. Fremont, "whether we can get through. We must cross. We are going to cross. The question is how we can do it." They crossed.

One of the men who had borne up as long as he could, told Col. Fremont that he could go no farther, and begged that he might be left to die. They were climbing a mountain. Col. Fremont was very anxious to save him. He urged him to take courage, and try again. It was all in vain. Col. Fremont then strapped him to his back, and with the blood running from both his own knees he clambered up among the rocks, and hauled the man to the top of the mountain.

Fuller died, "like a man, in his saddle," as

Fremont wrote to Col. Benton, the very day at the close of which they reached an Indian camp. At this place the Delawares purchased, at an enormous price, an old dog, and made a feast of him. The whites, at exorbitant prices, obtained a very little food. The next day they reached Parawan. Most of the men, when they got in sight of this Mormon settlement, became like children. They were entirely overcome. Some fell to the earth, unconscious, like dead men.

All but one of the whites were left at Parawan. Col. Fremont, after waiting a few days to recruit, but a considerable portion of which he spent in making scientific observations, continued on towards California. His brave Delawares, who would have followed him into regions which all of us wish to avoid, stuck by him.

Before Col. Fremont reached California, they met with other narrow escapes, and passed through many scenes similar to some of the most stirring of those recorded.

When they were in the mountains their horses and mules had become starved almost to death. Just at the edge of evening, one

day, a little valley was discovered, shut in all round by mountains. With delight they made towards it. When they were far down a very abrupt descent—Col. Fremont and Solomon some distance ahead of the others—they discovered that a large body of Horse Thief Indians were encamped upon the green spot, where they had a numerous band of fine horses, which, of course, they had stolen. The Colonel gave the command instantly to charge down upon them. This was, perhaps, the most dangerous attack in which he was ever engaged. Down they dashed, the mules jumping, sometimes, off from square-fronted rocks five or six feet in height. A shower of poisoned arrows from the bows of the Horse Thieves greeted them. Two of them struck a Delaware, and dangerously wounded him. Five horses were killed and more wounded. On, however, they rushed, cutting off the foe from their band of horses, and driving them up the mountain sides.

No reprisal could have been more timely. The fresh, fine horses captured here, bore Col. Fremont and his men triumphantly over the mountains, and into California.

## CHAPTER X.

Nominations of Col. Fremont for President—His Speech from the Balcony—Letter to National Americans—Letter to Philadelphia Committee of People's Convention—Platform of the Philadelphia Convention. Testimonials—From South Carolina—From Baron Humboldt.

**C**OL. FREMONT was first formally nominated for the Presidency in his own camp on the banks of the Kansas river in October, 1853, while he was detained at St. Louis by illness. His name was proposed as that of a man every way qualified for the office by one of his party from Charleston, South Carolina, and was accepted by acclamation as the first choice of every man in the camp.

On the 10th of June last he was nominated by a State Convention at Concord, New Hampshire; and on the 18th of the same month by the National People's Convention at Philadelphia. He was afterwards nominated by the National Americans at New York.

On the evening of June 25, after a large and remarkably enthusiastic ratification meeting at the Tabernacle in the city of New York, a dense crowd of people proceeded to the house of Col. Fremont in Ninth street, and in response to their loud calls he appeared and briefly addressed them.

### COL. FREMONT'S SPEECH.

GENTLEMEN, I thank you for this friendly call. (Cheers.) I am happy to receive this enthusiastic expression of devotion to the cause in which we are engaged. (Loud and continued cheers.) The enthu-

siasm you have manifested, and the soundness of the cause to which it is directed, give me great confidence in your final and complete success. (Deafening yells and cheers.) If I am elected to the high office for which your partiality has nominated me, I will endeavor to administer the government according to the true spirit of the Constitution, (Cries of "You know you will," and "You're our man,") as it was interpreted by the great men who framed and adopted it, and in such a way as to preserve both Liberty and the Union. (Loud and protracted cheers.) In my present relation to you it is hardly proper I should say more to-night (cries of "Go on," "Go on"), especially as you will expect me hereafter to communicate with you more fully. I therefore content myself with again thanking you very warmly for your congratulations and the kindness you have manifested towards me.

### LETTER FROM COLONEL FREMONT TO THE NATIONAL AMERICANS.

NEW YORK, Monday, June 30, 1856.

GENTLEMEN: I received with deep sensibility your communication, informing me that a Convention of my fellow-citizens, recently assembled in this city, have nominated me their candidate for the highest office in the gift of the American people: and I desire through you to offer to the members of that body, and to their respective constituencies, my grateful acknowledgment for this distinguished expression of confidence. In common with all who are interested in the welfare of the country, I had been strongly impressed by the generous spirit of conciliation which influenced the action of your assembly and characterizes your note. A disposition to avoid

all special questions tending to defeat unanimity in the great cause, for the sake of which it was conceded that differences of opinion on less eventful questions should be held in abeyance, was evinced alike in the proceedings of your Convention in reference to me, and in the manner in which you have communicated the result. In this course no sacrifice of opinion on any side becomes necessary.

I shall, in a few days, be able to transmit you a paper, designed for all parties engaged in our cause, in which I present to the country my views of the leading subjects which are now put in issue in the contest for the Presidency. My confidence in the success of our cause is greatly strengthened by the belief that these views will meet the approbation of your constituents.

Trusting that the national and patriotic feelings evinced by the tender of your co-operation in the work of regenerating the government, may increase the glow of enthusiasm which pervades the country, and harmonize all elements in our truly great and common cause, I accept the nomination with which you have honored me, and am, gentlemen, very respectfully,

Your fellow-citizen,

J. C. FREMONT.

MESSRS. THOMAS H. FORD, AMBROSE STEVENS, W. A. HOWARD, STEPHEN M. ALLEN, SIMON P. CASE, THOS. SHANKLAND, J. E. DUNHAM, M. C. GEER—a Committee of the National American Party.

**LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE—COL. FREMONT TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE PEOPLE'S CONVENTION.**

NEW YORK, July 8, 1856.

GENTLEMEN: You call me to a high responsibility by placing me in the van of a great movement of the people of the United States, who, without regard to past differences, are uniting in a common effort to bring back the action of the Federal Government to the principles of WASHINGTON and JEFFERSON. Comprehending the magnitude of the trust which they have declared themselves willing to place in my hands, and deeply sensible to the honor which their unreserved confidence in this threatening position of the public affairs implies, I feel that I cannot better respond than by a sincere declaration that, in the event of my election to the Presidency, I should enter upon the execution of its duties with a single-hearted determination to promote the good of the whole country, and to direct solely to this end all the power of the Government, irrespective of party issues, and regardless of sectional strife. The declaration of principles embodied in the resolves of your Convention expresses the sentiments in which I have been educated, and which have been ripened into convictions by personal observation and experience. With this declaration and avowal, I think it necessary to revert to only two of the subjects embraced in the resolutions, and to those only because events have surrounded them with grave and critical circumstances, and given to them especial importance.

I concur in the views of the Convention deprecating the foreign policy to which it adverts. The assumption that we have the right to take from another nation its domains because we want them, is an abandonment of the honest character which our country has acquired. To provoke hostilities by unjust assumptions would be to sacrifice the peace and character of the country, when all its interests might be more certainly secured, and its objects attained by just and healing counsels, involving no loss of reputation.

International embarrassments are mainly the results of a secret diplomacy, which aims to keep from the knowledge of the people the operations of the Government. This system is inconsistent with the

character of our institutions, and is itself yielding gradually to a more enlightened public opinion, and to the power of a free Press, which, by its broad dissemination of political intelligence, secures in advance to the side of justice the judgment of the civilized world. An honest, firm and open policy in our foreign relations would command the united support of the nation, whose deliberate opinions it would necessarily reflect.

Nothing is clearer in the history of our institutions than the design of the nation in asserting its own independence and freedom, to avoid giving countenance to the extension of Slavery. The influence of the small but compact and powerful class of men interested in Slavery, who command one section of the country, and wield a vast political control as a consequence in the other, is now directed to turn this impulse of the Revolution and reverse its principles. The extension of Slavery across the continent is the object of the power which now rules the Government; and from this spirit has sprung those kindred wrongs in Kansas so truly portrayed in one of your resolutions, which prove that the elements of the most arbitrary governments have not been vanquished by the just theory of our own. It would be out of place here to pledge myself to any particular policy that has been suggested to terminate the sectional controversy engendered by political animosities, operating on a powerful class banded together by a common interest. A practical remedy is the admission of Kansas into the Union as a Free State. The South should, in my judgment, earnestly desire such consummation. It would vindicate the good faith—it would correct the mistake of the repeal; and the North, having practically the benefit of the agreement between the two sections, would be satisfied, and good feeling be restored. The measure is perfectly consistent with the honor of the South, and vital to its interests. That fatal act which gave birth to this purely sectional strife, originating in the scheme to take from free labor the country secured to it by a solemn covenant, cannot be too soon disarmed of its pernicious force. The only genial region of the middle latitudes left to the emigrants of the Northern States for homes cannot be conquered from the free laborers, who have long considered it as set apart for them in our inheritance, without provoking a desperate struggle. Whatever may be the persistence of the particular class which seems ready to hazard everything for the success of the unjust scheme it has partially effected, I firmly believe that the great heart of the nation, which throbs with the patriotism of the free men of both sections, will have power to overcome it. They will look to the rights secured to them by the Constitution of the Union, as their best safeguard from the oppression of the class which—by a monopoly of the soil and of slave labor to till it—might in time reduce them to the extremity of laboring upon the same terms with the slaves. The great body of non-slaveholding free men, including those of the South, upon whose welfare Slavery is an oppression, will discover that the power of the General Government over the public lands may be beneficially exerted to advance their interests and secure their independence. Knowing this, their suffrages will not be wanting to maintain that authority in the Union which is absolutely essential to the maintenance of their own liberties, and which has more than once indicated the purpose of disposing of the public lands in such a way as would make every settler upon them a freeholder.

If the people intrust to me the administration of the Government, the laws of Congress in relation to the Territories will be faithfully executed. All its authority will be exerted in aid of the national will to re-establish the peace of the country on the just principles which have heretofore received the sanc-

tion of the Federal Government, of the States, and of the people of both sections. Such a policy would leave no aliment to that sectional party which seeks its aggrandizement by appropriating the new Territories to capital in the form of Slavery, but would inevitably result in the triumph of free labor—the natural capital which constitutes the real wealth of this great country, and creates that intelligent power in the masses alone to be relied on as the bulwark of free institutions.

Trusting that I have a heart capable of comprehending our whole country, with its varied interests, and confident that patriotism exists in all parts of the Union, I accept the nomination of the Convention, in the hope that I may be enabled to serve usefully its cause, which I consider the cause of constitutional Freedom.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
J. C. FREMONT.

To MESSRS. H. S. LANE, President of the Convention; JAMES M. ASHLEY, ANTHONY J. BLEECKER, JOSEPH C. HORNBLOWER, E. R. HOAR, THADDEUS STEVENS, KINGSLEY S. BINGHAM, JOHN A. WILLS, C. F. CLEVELAND, CYRUS ALDRICH, Committee, &c.

Among the very numerous testimonials in favor of Col. Fremont, the following may not be out of place here:

#### SWORD FROM SOUTH CAROLINA.

The citizens of Charleston, S. C., at a public meeting, in 1846, after passing resolutions, highly eulogistic of Col. Fremont's services in Oregon and California, voted him a sword, limiting the subscription for the same at one dollar to a person. The sword is costly and elegantly wrought, of gold, silver mounted, in a scabbard of gold, and bears the following inscription:

Presented  
BY THE CITIZENS OF CHARLESTON  
TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL  
JOHN CHARLES FREMONT.  
A MEMORIAL OF THEIR HIGH APPRECIATION  
OF THE GALLANTRY AND SCIENCE  
HE HAS DISPLAYED IN HIS  
SERVICES IN OREGON AND CALIFORNIA.

#### SWORD BELT FROM THE CHARLESTON WOMEN.

[From the Charleston, S. C., Mercury, Sept. 27, 1847.]

We regret to learn that Col. Fremont, whose departure for Aiken we noticed a few days since, did not reach that place to see his mother alive. She died but a few hours before his arrival. He accompanied her remains the next day to this city, and after witnessing the last sad rites, left here the evening following for Washington. In this affliction, rendered doubly poignant by his deep disappointment in not receiving her parting look of recognition after his long and eventful absence, he has the sympathy of our entire community.

"The marked and brilliant career of Col. Fremont has arrested general attention and admiration, and has been watched with a lively interest by his fellow citizens of South Carolina. Charleston particularly is proud of him, and the reputation which he has at so early an age achieved for himself, she claims as something in which she too has a share. But for the melancholy circumstance attending his visit, our city would have manifested by suitable demonstrations their respect for him, and their continued confidence in his honor and integrity. It will require something

more than mere accusation to sully them in the minds of the people of Charleston. Some months since a sword was voted to him by our citizens, the individual subscriptions to which were limited to \$1; it now awaits his acceptance at a suitable opportunity. We are happy to learn that the ladies of Charleston propose, by a similar subscription, to furnish an appropriate belt to accompany the sword, an evidence that they too can appreciate the gallantry and heroism which have so signalized marked his career, and have thrown an air of romance over the usually dry detail of scientific pursuits."

#### LETTER FROM BARON HUMBOLDT.

To COL. FREMONT, Senator:—It is very agreeable to me, sir, to address you these lines by my excellent friend, our Minister to the United States, N. de Gérold. After having given you, in the new edition of my "Aspects of Nature," the public testimony of the admiration which is due to your gigantic labors between St. Louis, of Missouri, and the coasts of the South Sea, I feel happy to offer you, in this little token of my existence (*dans ce petit signe de vie*), the homage of my warm acknowledgment. You have displayed a noble courage in distant expeditions, braved all the dangers of cold and famine, enriched all the branches of the natural sciences, illustrated a vast country which was almost entirely unknown to us.

A merit so rare has been acknowledged by a sovereign warmly interested in the progress of physical geography; the king orders me to offer you the grand golden medal destined to those who have labored at scientific progress. I hope that this mark of the Royal good will, will be agreeable to you at a time when, upon the proposition of the illustrious geographer, Chas. Ritter, the Geographical Society at Berlin has named you an honorary member. For myself, I must thank you particularly also for the honor which you have done in attaching my name and that of my fellow-laborer and intimate friend, Mr. Bonpland, to countries neighboring to those which have been the object of our labors. *California, which has so nobly resisted the introduction of Slavery, will be worthily represented by a friend of liberty and of the progress of intelligence.*

Accept, I pray you, sir, the expression of my high and affectionate consideration.

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

A. VON HUMBOLDT.

SANS SOUCI, October 7, 1850.

On the envelope thus addressed:

To Colonel Fremont, Senator,  
With the Great Golden Medal  
For progress in the Sciences.  
BARON HUMBOLDT.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE GRAND GOLDEN MEDAL.

Of fine gold, massive, more than double the size of the American double eagle, and of exquisite workmanship. On the face is the medallion head of the King, Frederick-Wilhelm the Fourth, surrounded by figures emblematical of Religion, Jurisprudence, Medicine and the Arts. On the reverse, Apollo, in the chariot of the Sun, drawn by four high-mettled, plunging horses, traversing the zodiac, and darting rays of light from his head.

#### FROM HUMBOLDT'S "ASPECTS OF NATURE."

Fremont's map and geographical investigations comprehend the extensive region from the junction of the Kansas River with the Missouri to the Falls of the Columbia, and to the missions of Santa Barbara

and Puebla de los Angeles, in New California; or a space of 28 degrees of longitude, and from the 34th to the 35th parallel of latitude. Four hundred points have been determined hypsometrically by barometric observations, and, for the most part, geographically by astronomical observations; so that a district which, with the windings of the route, amounts to 3,600 geographical miles, from the mouth of the Kansas to Fort Van Couver and the shores of the Pacific (almost 720 miles more than the distance from Madrid to Tobolsk) has been represented in profile, showing the relative heights above the level of the sea.

As I was, I believe, the first person who undertook to represent, in geognostic profile, the form of entire countries—such as the Iberian Peninsula, the high lands of Mexico, and the Cordilleras of South America (the semi-perspective projections of a Siberian traveller, the Abbe Chappe, were founded on mere and generally ill-judged estimations of the fall of rivers)—it has given me peculiar pleasure to see the geographical method of representing the form of the earth in a vertical direction, of the elevations of the solid portion of our planet above its watery covering, applied onto grand a scale as has been done in Fremont's map.

## CHAPTER XI.

Colonel Fremont's Religion—Mariposa Estate—Personal Appearance—Power of Endurance—Preface at the End—Concluding Remarks.

COLONEL FREMONT'S religion seems to consist chiefly in trying to do as he would be done by, rather than in external pretensions. He is a communicant of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in which he was confirmed at the early age of seventeen. It was the faith in which his mother lived and died, and reared her children. Her remains, and those of his dear sister and brother, now rest in the grave-yard of St. Philip's Church—Protestant Episcopal—in Charleston, where he buried them. His children have all been baptized in the Episcopal Church, which his wife also, who was educated a Presbyterian, attends.

These things are stated, because they are facts. Can that be a sound and healthy state of public feeling which regards them as essential, either way, so far as concerns the fitness of Colonel Fremont for the Presidency? Where, then, is our boasted freedom of conscience? The theory of religious as well as civil liberty lies at the very foundation of our government. Can it be possible that in the conduct of a political canvass in this free Republic, such certificates as the following—which is perfectly authentic—are important?

"WASHINGTON CITY, July 12, 1856.

"The following children of J. Charles and Jessie Benton Fremont have been baptized in the Church of the Parish of the Epiphany, Washington, D. C.—their baptisms being recorded in the register of said parish:

"1848, Aug. 15, Elizabeth McDowell Benton Fremont.

"1848, Aug. 15, Benton Fremont.

"1853, Dec. 28, John Charles Fremont.

"1855, Aug. 1, Francis Preston Fremont.

"As none were baptized in a house, but all were brought to the church, the order of the Protestant Episcopal Church for 'the Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants,' was that which was used.

"J. W. FRENCH,

"Rector of the Parish of the Epiphany,

"Washington, D. C."

Colonel Fremont owns a large amount of property in California, including the Mari-

posa estate, which, after protracted and expensive litigation, was confirmed to him by the Supreme Court at Washington last winter; but all his property, at present, is unproductive; so that he is now, as far as income is concerned, as he has been most of his life, a poor man. At the time of his election to the United States Senate, Colonel Fremont was making money very rapidly, by the gold digging on his estate. He had a great number of men at work on shares. That ended with his entrance upon public life, and the pecuniary sacrifice to him was immense.

Colonel Fremont is about five feet nine inches in height, slightly built, wiry, and muscular. What his complexion was originally it is difficult to tell, but his strongly-marked face has been pretty well bronzed by sun and wind. The Delaware Indians called him "The Iron Man." His manners are quiet and unpretending; his presence is impressive, and command is written in his large, prominent, piercing, hazel-gray eye. Mr. Selover, of California, who saw him participating in the encounter with a rough and turbulent opposition at the time of Jack Hays's election as sheriff in San Francisco, says that he looked, then, just about seven feet high. His heavy, waving, dark hair, sprinkled slightly with white, parts naturally in the middle, and he wears a full beard, after the dictates of Nature and the practice of the early Christians. To this protection he attributes, in a great degree, the preservation of his teeth, which are perfect, amid the extremes of temperature to which he has been subjected, and of his face from the frost. Some time before the Philadelphia Convention, a number of wise-aces recommended to Colonel Fremont that he should shave off his beard and comb his hair differently, as he would thus remove one objection to his nomination. His reply was worthy of Jackson. "If the support of the whole New York delegation depended upon my doing such a thing," said he, "the only

effect it could have upon me would be, that I should wear my beard as it is, and part my hair a little wider than I do now."

During his expeditions Col. Fremont always rode on a wooden saddle tree, without leather or other covering. He was considered a remarkably fine rider, even among the Mexicans and Indians. He has met with many a hard fall in his wild adventures; but never had a limb broken. Sometimes his horse would tumble over the rocks; again, getting a foot into some treacherous wolf-hole, he would pitch headlong to the ground. But the rider, agile as a cat, always struck safely. Alvarado, ex-governor of California, said that no other such feat as Fremont's ride of eight hundred miles in less than eight days had ever been performed in that country.

A man who was with Fremont in his fourth expedition, says he never saw him with an overcoat on, in the coldest weather upon the Rocky Mountains. He has tramped many a mile through the snow, with no better covering for his feet than ragged and worn out moccasins. On one occasion, he had a leg and foot badly frozen. The toe nails came off; but, a thing unusual, it is said, in such cases, they afterwards grew out again.

Col. Fremont manifests a regard and consideration for the feelings of others, and a delicacy about wounding them, which seem to belong to the character of woman; but withal he possesses not only the courage but seemingly the toughness and endurance of a grizzly bear.

Throughout his journeys Col. Fremont's astronomical observations were made by himself, and were never omitted in consequence of cold, fatigue, hunger, or danger. One of his men says that he has seen him sitting patiently on the snow three or four hours in the night, with the thermometer twenty or thirty degrees below zero, waiting patiently for the appearance of a star, and handling the brass instrument without gloves.

The genuineness, simplicity, and strength of his character inspire those around him with regard and esteem. A recent traveller in Kansas stopped at the house of Solomon, a Delaware, who travelled for years with Col. Fremont, and is now a prosperous farmer in that territory. He was received with ordinary hospitality, but when the visitor informed Solomon that he was a friend of Col. Fremont, the heart of the Indian as well as his house seemed to open. He could not do too much, and he rendered the stranger before he parted with him a very important service. Solomon had a child about a year old, named John C. Fremont. Saghundai, the brawny old Delaware chief, was recently at Washington. He could speak only a few words of

English, but among these were the following, which he often repeated: "Fremont, brave man—brave man—Col. Fremont, brave man!"

People who read a preface at all, generally read it after they have finished the body of the work; so, for convenience sake, as an Irishman would say, it seems proper that the beginning of a book should be at the end.

It is quite customary for persons who write the biographies of candidates to disclaim all reference, in preparing their works, to the pending election.

Supposing them to tell the truth, it must be admitted that such books follow marvellously quick in the wake of the nominating conventions. In this instance, no disclaimer of the kind can be put forth. Almost the sole object of this brief sketch of the life of Col. Fremont has been to promote his election to the Presidency. It has been written in the confident belief that all that is requisite to secure his choice to that office, is to make his character and principles generally known and understood by the voters of the United States.

An obscure boy, deprived at an early age, by death, of the counsels of his father; friendless, save the hearts which his own sweet temper and noble qualities won; with the hard hand of poverty laid heavily upon him; we have seen him rise to distinction by his own vigorous and persevering exertions, till the earth is filled with the renown of his exploits. The path-finder through trackless and desolate regions, he has opened a vast empire to settlement and civilization. Countless as the stars of heaven, or the sands upon the sea shore, are the myriads of human beings who, within the centuries to come, shall follow in the way which, with the aid of celestial light and the telescopic glass, he first located and made plain. He has written his name in the clear sunbeams on the summits of the everlasting hills; and rendered his fame durable by linking it to star-eyed science. Brave yet merciful; as a conqueror, he sought not to devastate but to improve. With the drawn sword in his right hand, the proffer of peace he carried always in his left.

In the similarity of occupations and other circumstances rather of an accidental character, a parallel has been traced between Fremont and Washington. A far more important resemblance exists in that calm steadfastness of purpose which long outlives the resolution of ordinary men, and possesses in itself something of the nature of immortality; and in that strength of will which executes plans of magnitude beyond the power of original conception in the common mind, and rising with complicated difficulties and trying emergencies into gigantic proportions, constitutes an almost superhuman power.

*New York Aug 1 18*







